

STARS AND STRIPES.®

**Gulf War vet
turns experience
into art**

Scene magazine

Brian Toal



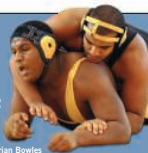
**Wounded GIs get
into holiday spirit
at Schweinfurt**

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**Some grapplers
get revenge in
Wolfpack Classic**

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Wiesbaden's Gregg Surpin, bottom, and Patch's Brian Bowles



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SUNDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2004

\$1.00

1st ID's DISCOM troops return from Iraq mission

53 soldiers from advance party back in Kitzingen after 10 month-deployment

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Back to Bastogne

Vets mark bloody Battle of the Bulge's 60th anniversary Page 3



Stripes file photo

Above: A U.S. soldier approaches a burning house in Lombre, a small town in the Ardennes region of Belgium, on Jan. 19, 1945. Smoke from the house attracted fire from Germans, which wounded a photographer covering the fighting for the U.S. Signal Corps.

Left: U.S. World War II veterans Harvey Waugaman, left, from Greensburg, Pa., and Raymond Dynowski salute during a commemoration ceremony Saturday in Bastogne, Belgium.

AP

STARS & STRIPES

COMING
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On Thursday

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the European way

Catherine Zeta-Jones

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News Tracker ... What's new with old news

States

Rapper shooting: A man who wounded rapper Freaky Zeeky and killed the rapper's friend last year was sentenced to 30 years to life in prison. Chauncey Dillon, 29, of Brooklyn, N.Y., was found guilty in October in Manhattan's state Supreme Court after a two-week trial and two days of jury deliberations. "It's a dreadful, horrible crime, aggravated by the fact that it's a shooting in the middle of a Manhattan street, a residential neighborhood with guns fired all over the place," Justice Bonnie Witmer said.

Nazi guard citizenship: The Justice Department asked an immigration judge on Friday to deport an Ohio man the government says was a guard at Nazi concentration camps.

John Demjanjuk, 84, of Seven Hills, Ohio, is a retired auto worker who the government says served during World War II as an armed guard at Nazi extermination and concentration camps.

In April, the 6th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals unanimously affirmed a lower court decision revoking Demjanjuk's U.S. citizenship on several grounds, including his "willing" service in an SS-run unit "dedicated to exploiting and exterminating" Jewish civilians in Nazi-occupied Poland. Hundreds of thousands of people were killed in these camps.

Bering Sea freighter: Rough waves battered the remains of a grounded freighter Friday, causing more heavy oil to spill into the Bering Sea off the coast of Alaska's island in the Aleutian chain.

Spill response officials said a flyover on Friday revealed more fuel leaking from the Selendang Ayu, forming a dark sea foam around the vessel.

Ariz. prison standoff: One of two inmates accused of taking a pair of guards hostage in an Arizona prison watchdog said Friday he would protest a judge's ruling by not attending his trial next month.

Ricky Wassenaar, charged with attempted murder and sexual assault in the January standoff, said he was reacting to a decision requiring him to wear electronic monitors during his trial, arguing they would prejudice the jury against him. He is abandoning plans to represent himself, he said.

1963 church bombing: An Alabama state appeals court Friday refused to vacate the murder conviction of ex-Klansman Bobby Frank Cherry, who died while serving a life term for the deaths of four black girls in a 1963 Birmingham church bombing.

Cherry's attorney had asked the Court of Criminal Appeals to vacate the conviction under a rule that allows such action if a defendant dies during an appeal.

Cherry, who suffered from cancer, died last month at age 74 while his lawyer was seeking a rehearing.

Immigrant truck deaths: The lawyer for a man accused of abandoning a truck crammed with illegal immigrants in a dead-



Michael Jackson and kids: Christmas came early for some 200 children who got to play at Michael Jackson's amusement park and meet Santa Claus. "I hope you have a wonderful day, Merry Christmas. I love you," the pop singer called out to the children Friday from the driveway of his estate. "We love you," shouted on of the youngsters. "I love you more," replied Jackson, who faces trial next year on child molestation charges.

ly smuggling attempt claims the driver is being singled out for the death penalty because he is black. A federal judge Friday told prosecutors to explain.

At a hearing, Judge Vanessa Gilmore asked Assistant U.S. Attorney Tony Roberts to provide her a letter from Attorney General John Ashcroft explaining his office's refusal to "disclose why you sought the death penalty on this guy, the only black guy, and not on the others."

Truck driver Tyrone Williams, 33, of Schenectady, N.Y., is accused of abandoning a trailer crammed with illegal immigrants traveling across Texas in the stifling heat. 17 bodies were found inside the trailer and two others died later.

World

Philippines storm relief: The Philippines thanked the U.S. military on Saturday for its help after storms and typhoons left more than 1,000 people dead and at least \$50 missing.

At least 900 American troops backed by 13 helicopters and C-130 cargo planes were deployed to the devastated northeast, U.S. Ambassador Francis Ricciardone said at a ceremony to end the relief mission.

The operation cost \$7 million. The U.S. Embassy said in a statement. The military also donated \$1 million in tents, generators, medical supplies and water containers.

The U.S. government contributed \$500,000 through the Philippine Red Cross and nongovernment organizations, Ricciardone said.

Madrid train bombings: Four suspected Islamic militants arrested in the Canary Islands were to arrive in Madrid on Saturday under heavy guard, an official said.

One of the four suspects — Hassan al Haski, 41 — is believed to have played a role in the March 11 Madrid train bomb-

ings, an attack that killed 191 people, the Interior Ministry said Friday.

Military

N.J. school strafing: An Air National Guard pilot who accidentally fired on an Egg Harbor Township, N.J., school during a nighttime training exercise was to blame for the incident, but poorly designed controls in the F-16 also played a role, the Air Force concluded Friday.

The report, obtained by The Associated Press, also disclosed there have been three other incidents this year in which an F-16 pilot unintentionally fired during nighttime strafing missions. No one was hurt in any of the incidents.

National missile defense system: After the Pentagon's national missile defense system failed a key test this week, the Bush administration has dropped its plans to activate the system by the end of the year.

A spokesman for the military's U.S. Northern Command said Friday that the missile system would not become operational until early 2005 at the soonest, meaning the Pentagon will miss a goal advanced by President Bush.

Air Force sex assaults: More sexual assaults occur within the Air Force's Air Combat Command than are reported, according to a report based on an internal review that the command released Friday.

ACC, which trains and equips forces to provide combat airpower to U.S. warfighting commands, needs more standardized education programs focused on preventing sexual assault, the report concluded.

The command also needs to create a climate in which assault victims are confident they can report the crime to commanders and receive effective support, the report said.

Stories and photos from wire services

Reviews of video games,
movies, books and new
gadgets, plus entertainment
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C.W. FICK JR./Courtesy of the U.S. Army

Above: Sgt. 1st Class Kimberly A. Thompson chats with Kate Nolan, one of more than 150 Battle of the Bulge veterans who attended a USO night Thursday hosted by the U.S. Army Field Support Battalion in Dudelange, Luxembourg. Nolan was a nurse during World War II. Thompson is an operations noncommissioned officer with the battalion. Right: A Belgian World War II veteran of the 1st brigade paracommando, Alexandre Finchelstein, salutes the General George S. Patton memorial in Bastogne on Saturday.



AP

Vets honored for a fight worth winning

Belgium, Luxembourg welcome their Battle of the Bulge liberators

BY KEVIN DOUGHERTY

Stars and Stripes

WBASTOGNE, Belgium — Whether it is on the beaches of Normandy or the streets of Bastogne, American World War II veterans get the royal treatment whenever they attend a remembrance ceremony at an old battleground.

Such was the case this past week for many of the veterans who traveled to Belgium and Luxembourg to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge.

On Saturday in Belgium, even with the country's sovereign, Albert II, present, the veterans drew the king's share of the attention.

"The reception has been incredible," said Carl Dalke, who served with the 506th Parachute Infantry Regiment of the 101st Airborne Division.

Then he leaned forward and quietly added: "I feel like a cross between Dwight Eisenhower and Audie Murphy."

While commemorative ceremonies will continue well into next month, the major events marking the monthlong battle are occurring this weekend in Bastogne and nearby villages, such as Noville. Organizers estimate that at least a couple of hundred U.S. veterans of the battle traveled to Europe to take part.

Unlike in Normandy, France, this past summer, the events honoring the successes and sacrifices of the Allies were relatively low-key affairs. Sure, the king was in attendance, but every event had a home-spun charm to it.

"It's a lot nicer than last year," said Senior Airman Ben Secrest, who is assigned to Spangdahlem Air Base, Germany. "There are more people here and they brought the veterans back."

The pace of the scheduled events suited the World War II veterans just fine, given they are either in their late 70s or 80s. There was a parade in the morning followed by two wreath-lighting ceremonies. In the evening, a sound-and-light show, designed to simulate a nighttime air attack, was staged.

A parachute drop and a vintage vehicle parade are on tap for Sunday.

The Battle of the Bulge was a key turning point in the war. The Dec. 16 dawn attack by the German army caught the Allies by surprise, but Eisenhower, commander of the Allied forces, was able to move enough men and vehicles into the fight to limit the advance and to eventually reverse it.

Like the French this summer, the Belgians — young and old — turned out in large numbers to greet their liberators.

"For us, it is a great day," said 81-year-old Robert Lemaire, a Belgian army veteran.

"The way the people feel toward us, it's out of this world," said Dwight Rist, 85, a U.S. veteran. "You wouldn't see anything like this in the United States."

Rist was referring in particular to the outpouring of affection from young Belgians, many of who sought autographs and the opportunity to pose with the American vets. He said younger Americans, by and

large, don't know and don't have much of an interest in what the veterans did.

The exception is today's servicemembers.

"I'm into history. I know a little bit about" the battle, said Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Douglas Vrtiska, who is assigned to Naval Station Rota, Spain.

Attending the ceremonies, Vrtiska said, permits him "to show my gratitude and respect, and to let them know we haven't forgotten them."

Army Spc. Isaac Pollack wishes his father had made it back for the ceremonies. Standing in Bastogne's McAuliffe Square, Pollack talked at length about his father, Herman, who was assigned to the 82nd Airborne Division.

Pollack said he didn't talk about the fighting very much, just about "the craziness during the down time."

He never made it back to Europe, Pollack said of his father, who has since passed away. "He always wanted to," Pollack said, "but he did not have the time."

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U.S. World War II veterans salute Saturday at ceremony in Bastogne, Belgium, marking the 60th anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge.

Belgian town was 'nuts' even before McAuliffe's celebrated exclamation

BY KEVIN DOUGHERTY

Stars and Stripes

BASTOGNE, Belgium — Forgive the people of Bastogne for being a bit nutty this weekend.

For starters, hundreds of American World War II veterans came to town to mark the 60th anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge, the single biggest battle ever fought on the Western Front.

Belgians deeply appreciate the Americans who liberated them

from Nazi Germany, and then beat back the massive counteroffensive launched six decades ago.

Then there is the tale of U.S. Army Brig. Gen. Anthony McAuliffe and his famous one-word reply to a German general's surrender demand: "Nuts!"

"We were actually discussing that," Air Force Senior Airman Ben Secrest, from Spangdahlem Air Base, Germany, said of the story as he stood in the town

square named after McAuliffe. "I don't really know the story."

But what even more people don't know is that Bastogne had a thing for nuts well before McAuliffe and his men rolled into town.

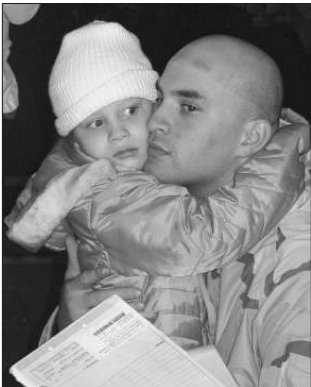
Back in the 18th century, farmers, cow tenders and shepherds would flock to Bastogne for the annual Nut Fair, the last fair of the season. It was here they would look for work for the coming year.

SEE NUTS ON PAGE 6



STEVE LIEWER/Stars and Stripes

Left: Soldiers from the 1st Infantry Division's Division Support Command stand at attention, moments before their reunion with families at Harvey Barracks in Kitzingen, Germany. Fifty-three members of the unit returned home with the division's advance party Saturday after serving 10 months in Iraq. **Right:** Sgt. Vishnutivanan Lavarrkkaeti hugs his daughter, Monica, during Saturday's reunion. It was Monica's fifth birthday.



KEIRO KURAYA LIEWER/Special to Stars and Stripes

1st ID's DISCOM gets warm Kitzingen return

BY STEVE LIEWER

Stars and Stripes

KITZINGEN, Germany — Monica Lavarrkkaeti got the best fifth birthday present a little girl could ask for.

For a half-hour before sunrise, she sat quietly next to her mother, Melissa, and her 2-year-old sister, Maria, holding a birthday card tightly to her jacket.

Then a curtain opened, revealing 53 soldiers from the 1st Infantry Division's Division Support Command, or DISCOM, standing at attention under the roof of the "reintegration tent" at Kitzingen's Harvey Barracks.

After some patriotic music and one short speech, the soldiers and their families — separated by war for 10 months — ran together. Monica's daddy, Sgt. Vishnutivanan

an Lavarrkkaeti, scooped her up and kissed her, again and again.

"That was a blessing. We prayed for them to come home on her birthday," Melissa Lavarrkkaeti said. "[Waiting] was really hard on her, because she's so close to him."

The Lavarrkkaetis were among dozens of families reunited Saturday as the first three platoons of 1st ID soldiers arrived home in Germany after 10 months of duty in Iraq.

The 154-member advance party included mostly cooks, truck drivers, armorers and motor pool specialists who are needed to help prepare the way for main body of troops that will

follow them in February and March, said Spc. Rebecca Sharp-ton, a spokeswoman for the division's Würzburg-based rear detachment.

At least a few soldiers returned to most of the 1st ID's bases, Sharp-ton said. But the largest returning contingents included 52 from four units in Kattenbach, 30 in Schweinfurt and 53 DISCOM troops in Kitzingen.

"We've all been looking forward to this," said Maj. Christopher Chun, DISCOM's rear-detachment commander.

"It's a signal of the end of the deployment. That means our friends and our families are getting ready to come back."

The soldiers had endured an

all-night journey: more than six hours on a military cargo jet from Iraq, then five hours of collecting baggage, riding buses and turning in gear after arriving in Germany.

"It was a whole lot of waiting," Sgt. Lavarrkkaeti said.

But the final day of waiting paled compared with the seemingly endless months of separation.

"Ten 10-o-long months," said Kim Wilson, as she waited for her husband's unit, Staff Sgt. Kenneth Wilson.

"Just being with the kids, being both parents — that's the hardest part," said her friend Tonga Hackett, who was waiting for her husband, Sgt. 1st Class Robert Hackett.

Most of Saturday's returnees, though, were single soldiers whose homecomings with moms, dads and sweethearts are yet to come.

"It's a little depressing," said Pfc. Kristyn Geaslen, 22, of Nipoma, Calif., as she rode a bus from the tent back to her barracks at Harvey. "But we've been out together for 10 or 12 months. So it's kind of like we're all one family."

Some of the soldiers felt uncomfortable about coming home early with the advance party, which means their Iraq tours will be about two months shorter than those of their peers.

"It feels good, but we wish everybody could be here," said Pfc. Omar Williams, 20, of North Augusta, S.C. "We'll come back and prepare everything for them."

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Wounded soldiers celebrate season in Schweinfurt

BY STEVE LIEWER

Stars and Stripes

SCHWEINFURT, Germany — Spc. Aleksei Pavlov figured he'd be spending Christmas at war, dodging mortars with his buddies at Camp Paliwoda between patrols in the dangerous neighborhoods around Balad, Iraq.

Then last month, an insurgent's bullet caught him in the foot. Now Pavlov, 21, of the 1st Battalion, 26th Infantry Regiment, is recovering from his wound at his unit's home base in Schweinfurt.

Like dozens of 1st Infantry Division walking wounded, he is spending the holidays in limbo — far from his family in the United States, but also far from his friends at the front.

Santa Claus and the chaplains from the 280th Base Support Battalion brought some cheer to Pavlov and about 30 other injured soldiers from Schweinfurt at a holiday luncheon Friday morning at the Ledward Barracks chapel.

"This is definitely a morale-booster," said Pavlov, who was born in Russia but

moved with his family to Detroit more than a decade ago.

"This is a good experience, being here with your friends."

"I feel comfortable because I'm home," said Staff Sgt. Dennis Hendrickson, 36, of the 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry Regiment, who suffered a serious neck injury while on a patrol last summer. "But I'm constantly thinking about the other guys — hoping nothing crazy happens."

The troops feasted on German cheese and salami sandwiches and a decorated cake thick with icing. Santa gave each of the men a stocking loaded with CDs and T-shirts sent by Billy Blanks, the martial arts and hip-hop artist who has visited 1st ID troops in both Germany and Iraq.

Some women from family readiness groups serenaded them with Christmas carols. Sandra Hummel and Veda Church, two Schweinfurt-based Army wives who have worked hard to aid injured soldiers since the division deployed to Iraq last February, handed out handmade goudie bags filled with sweets and small toys.

"These guys are within a couple of years of my son," said Church, who hosts frequent barbecues for injured troops in her hometown. "I want to be a mom to them, that's what I want to do."

Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Keith Wright said the luncheon was organized in just a few days, after Hummel received a shipment of 145 gift-filled Christmas stockings from Blanks. She sent others to injured soldiers at Army hospitals in Würzburg, Landstuhl, and Washington, D.C.

"This is just a small way of saying 'thank you' for what you've done," Wright told the soldiers. "You've done a tremendous thing for this nation."

The soldiers clowned and grinned like kids. Some of them wrapped miniature "dog tags" carrying holiday messages around their foreheads and mugged for photographs.

"Stuff like this," said Pfc. Daniel O'Neal, 19, of the 1-18 Infantry, as he munches on a sandwich, "almost makes me feel like I'm at home."

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KRISTEN CHANDLER TOTH/Courtesy U.S. Army

Lt. Col. Jeffrey Feldman, commander of the 280th BSB based in Schweinfurt, leans over to talk to Spc. Michael Rutledge, left, and Sgt. Keyonta Oates, both of the 299th FSB, as the soldiers look through the gift bags given to them at Friday's Christmas party.

Program helps Darmstadt kids shop for parents



WARD SANDERSON/Stars and Stripes

Pfc. Claudia Padilla helps John Twombly, 4, pick out a holiday card for his family while big brother Nicholas, 6, looks on. Soldiers from Darmstadt's Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers program helped children shop for their parents Saturday. They wrapped presents and ate pizza afterward.

Girl Scouts bring Winter Wonderland to Naples

Three teens earn Gold Award for their efforts

BY SANDRA JONTZ
Stars and Stripes

NAPLES, Italy — In less than a year, Kim Bibeau watched three girls blossom into assertive, go-getting young women who could well be on their way to being three of tomorrow's leaders, she said.

As co-leader of Girl Scout Senior Troop 3 in Naples, she watched the three teens transform from being girls who relied on adults to run their meetings to creative leaders who did a bang-up job of putting on a Children's Winter Wonderland celebration that earned them the Gold Award, the Girl Scouts' highest award.

"They took off and did everything on their own," said Bibeau, mom of one of the teens. "They contacted the companies, contacted the base (commanding officer), raised the money and controlled the whole thing."

In June, the three Scouts — Jaime Hurley, Kendall Hurley and Kaitlin Bibeau, who also happen to be the only members of Senior Troop 3, embarked on their project when they learned the Naples Morale, Welfare and Recreation had to cut back on projects, including their annual winter and

Christmas holiday event.

They seized on the opportunity to not only provide the community with a "much-needed" event, but also a project that could earn them the Gold Award, said Kaitlin Bibeau, 15 and a sophomore at Naples High School.

The Winter Wonderland, which took place Dec. 11, provided children with a chance to visit Santa and Mrs. Claus, make holiday crafts and bake holiday cookies.

The Scouts tried to steer clear of a religious issue, so all people would feel welcomed, said Kendall Hurley, also 15 and a sophomore. "We focused on the commercial aspect of the season instead of the religious," she said.

All told, the teens each had to put in 40 leadership hours and 60 project hours, which included tasks such as raising cash to getting permission from the base commander to booking the elementary school gymnasium for the event, said Jaime Hurley, 17 and a senior at the high school. "It was very hard work," Jaime said. But, added Kaitlin, "It was a perfect success."

E-mail Sandra Jontz at: jontzs@stripes.osd.mil

**"They took off
and did everything
on their own."**

Kim Bibeau
Girl Scout Senior Troop 3 co-leader

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Spanglish

When the beautiful native Mexican woman Flor, the mother of a 12-year-old girl, becomes the housekeeper for an affluent Los Angeles family, cultures collide. Of all the horrifying pitfalls she worried about in this new culture, Flor had never fathomed the peril of being truly embraced by an upscale American family.

PG-13 PARENTS STRONGLY CAUTIONED
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Spanglish

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Adana	11-17 Feb
Aviano	10-10 Feb
Badenhausen	10-10 Feb
Badal	31 Dec-4 Jan
Bamberg	7-13 Jan
Baumholder	21-27 Jan
Biburg	4-10 Feb
Camp Doha	21-27 Jan
Darmstadt	28 Jan-3 Feb
Desheim	14-20 Jan
Friedberg	11-17 Feb
Giebelstadt	28 Jan-3 Feb
Grafenwoehr	7-13 Jan
Hanau	7-13 Jan
Heidelberg	31 Dec-4 Jan
Hohenfels	14-20 Jan
Ilshausen	28 Jan-3 Feb
Katterbach	21-27 Jan
Kitzingen	21-27 Jan
Kosovo	11-17 Feb
Lakenheath	7-13 Jan
Mannheim	31 Dec-4 Jan
Mildenhall	31 Dec-4 Jan
Ramstein Hercules	14-20 Jan
Ramstein Nightgale	7-13 Jan
Rhein Main	21-27 Jan
Schweinfurt	14-20 Jan
Spangdahlem	28 Jan-3 Feb
Tuzla	25 Feb-3 Mar
Volzingen	14-20 Jan
Vizcaya	11-17 Feb
Vittek	31 Dec-4 Jan
Vogelweh	31 Dec-4 Jan
Wachstein	7-13 Jan
Wuerzburg	31 Dec-4 Jan

FIRST RUN THEATERS

Big veteran recalls epic battle, epic victory

BY RICHARD PYLE
The Associated Press

Vincent Vicari knows about the Battle of the Bulge — not from books, movies or a TV mini-series, but because he was there.

He remembers Dec. 16, 1944, when the field phone rang in the command post of the 101st Airborne Division's artillery regiment near Reims, in eastern France, and a voice told him to wake his boss, Brig. Gen. Anthony McAuliffe, and have him report immediately to HQ.

He recalls that as McAuliffe went out the door, he turned and said, "Lieutenant, stay by that phone. Don't move." And he remembers the call an hour or so later, instructing him to alert all units to "get ready to move out, immediately."

Those units couldn't know it then, but they would soon be spending Christmas fending off Hitler's last desperate attempt to turn the Allied tide that had been advancing since D-Day, six months earlier. The six-week battle to come would be the largest of the war in western Europe.

Whatever was brewing, 1st Lt. Vicari and the rest of his unit didn't welcome it. They were still recovering from three months of combat in Operation Market Garden, the failed British-led invasion of Germany via Holland.

"We were exhausted and we'd had no time to re-equip," says Vicari. "We had no winter equipment. We were still in the same torn uniforms, short of food, ammo and everything else."

But orders were orders. By midnight, the troops had gathered their gear and boarded hastily organized convoys of trucks, jeeps and other vehicles for a bone-numbing dash to the front.

"Nobody knew where we were going," recalls Vicari, who was 24 and retired in Easton, Pa. "We had never heard of a place called Bastogne."

Bastogne, a market town where several roads converged, was critical to blocking the German advance.

At Bastogne, the 101st's paratroopers repulsed repeated attacks and were desperately low on ammunition. In the wintry darkness, American soldiers sang "Silent Night" and heard Germans singing "Stille Nacht," the same carol.

On Dec. 22, four German couriers approached American lines under a flag of truce, carrying a message "from the German commander to the American commander."

Asserting that Bastogne was "encircled," the note gave McAuliffe, who was acting commander of the 101st in the absence of Maj. Gen. Maxwell Taylor, two hours to surrender or face "total annihilation."

It offered the privileges of the Geneva Convention to the would-be POWs.

What came next would be one of World War II's seminal moments.

As Vincent Vicari, McAuliffe's personal aide, recalls, it 60 years later, "General Mac read the note and said, 'Aw, nuts.' Then he asked, 'What should I tell them?'"

Li. Col. Harry W.O. Kinnard, the division operations officer, said, "Why not tell them what you just said?"

"What did I just say?"

Nuts: One-word reply very appropriate

NUTS, FROM PAGE 3

If successful, the man would buy sweet breads and nuts for his girlfriend or fiancée, which represented a token of his affection and capacity to provide for her.

Today the festival is much more about tradition than labor.

On Saturday, as is the custom every year, handfuls of walnuts — now imported from California — were thrown from a town hall balcony to the crowd below. The king of Belgium, a granddaughter

of Gen. George S. Patton Jr., and a couple of U.S. war veterans had the honors this year.

Guadalupe Flores Jr., an 80-year-old veteran of the battle, wasn't on the balcony Saturday, but he was in the Bastogne during the siege as a member of the 101st Airborne Division.

"I happened to be in the area when the Germans came asking us to surrender," Flores said, as he recounted the scene, which featured four German men waving a makeshift white flag.

Carl Dalke was also in the area for the nutty exchange on Dec. 22, 1944, between McAuliffe and the German commander, Gen. Heinrich von Luetwitz.

"The Germans wanted to know what the phrase 'nuts' was all about," Dalke said. "McAuliffe was basically telling them to 'go to hell.' The Germans tried to send us there Christmas Eve, but we stopped them."

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Vincent Vicari, a member of the 101st Airborne Division who fought in Normandy and in the Battle of the Bulge sixty years ago, stands at the mailbox in front of his home in Easton, Pa.

"You said, 'nuts,'" Kinnard replied. McAuliffe scribbled a reply: "To the German commander, Nuts! From the American commander." He handed the message to Lt. Col. Joseph Harper, who had escorted the couriers.

To the Germans who didn't understand the Yankee colloquialism, Harper explained: "It means the same thing as 'go to hell.'"

Next day, the weather cleared, enabling American P-47 Thunderbolts to attack enemy positions while cargo planes dropped supplies to Bastogne's defenders, who by then knew that Lt. Gen. George Patton's 4th Armored Division was fighting through German-held territory to relieve them.

One day after Christmas, Lt. Col. Creighton Abrams, commanding the 37th Tank Battalion and under orders to attack German positions in a nearby village, realized that the road to Bastogne was open. His first four Sherman tanks roared into the battered town about 4 p.m.

"How are you, general?" asked a tank officer, Capt. William Dwight. "Gee, I'm mighty glad to see you," replied McAuliffe.

Vicari recalls Patton himself arriving soon after, with war correspondents in tow. He pinned a Distinguished Service Cross on "General Mac."

Bitter fighting continued across the front, but the Bulge was shrinking and on Jan. 8, even Hitler conceded failure. Abandoning hundreds of their fuel-starved panzer tanks, the Germans began retreating toward the Rhine; by Jan. 28, the battle was over.

The Allied casualty toll included 8,600 Americans and 200 British killed, 21,000 captured or missing and 47,000 wounded. The Germans suffered nearly 68,000 total casualties, including 17,000 dead.

Vicari recalls Patton himself arriving soon after, with war correspondents in tow. He pinned a Distinguished Service Cross on "General Mac."

From his perspective, the Bulge was Bastogne: "Hitler wanted it, and they used up a lot of fuel, a lot of ammo and a lot of men trying to take it. I don't think there was anybody who had guts like our people." Only he didn't say "guts."



World War II veterans attend a ceremony Saturday at the Brig. Gen. Anthony C. McAuliffe memorial in Bastogne, Belgium. McAuliffe commanded the 101st Airborne Division in 1944's Battle of the Bulge.

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Process aims to stop war before it starts

EUCOM tests the softer preemptive strikes of 'effects-based warfare'

BY CHARLIE COON

Stars and Stripes

STUTTGART, Germany — The U.S. military is working on a more sophisticated way to win.

Instead of scoring an initial crushing military victory only to get mired in the aftermath, the U.S. European Command is pioneering a system to intervene in failing nations before war becomes an option.

The new approach is called "effects-based" warfare and brings to the table diplomats, country experts and economists to help fight the problems that can lead to war. Then, after the president or a military commander establishes a desired "effect," the military and civilian experts plan the best way to achieve it.

It's a new way of fighting the war before the war.

"EUCOM still practices the art of bludgeoning people," said Rear Adm. Hamlin Tallent, director of the European Plans and Operations Center at Patch Barracks in Stuttgart.

"However, we are firmly convinced that you can and must engage on the other end [of the war-fighting spectrum]. We've been given the opportunity to expand on the other-than-direct-war responsibilities and expertise that we have. And we hope we can make the most of it."

Last month, as a way of testing "effects-based warfare," the center conducted a simulated rescue of an African nation that was about to implode. The weeklong exercise targeted a real country using real intelligence. Tallent declined to name the country, citing political sensitivities.

He also declined to give details about the impending chaos, for fear of revealing the nation. But he said the top priority for the unnamed country was to save its assets.

"Economic viability and security for all of that was a central point," Tallent said. "If the country's economic viability fails, then its legitimacy wanes. The ability of the government to support the people and have their respect fails."

The exercise, called Flexible Leader '05, took more than one year to pre-

pare. Diplomats, information specialists and economists from around the world were linked by secure Internet to EUCOM's Joint Operations Center, a high-tech, multi-screen amphitheater on Patch Barracks.

The new technology allowed them to share thoughts, information and pictures simultaneously. The second phase of Flexible Leader '05 is set to resume in June.

The acronym EUCOM uses for its four-pronged approach is DIME, which stands for diplomacy, information, military and economic. In the past, the U.S. government sometimes used too much of the military portion of the approach and not enough of the other elements, said Marine Col. Dave Beydler of EUCOM's Joint Training, Readiness and Exercises division.

He added that the military's proficiency sometimes outpaces the diplomatic, information and economic elements needed for victory.

EUCOM hopes to be the first major command to establish a full-bore Joint Interagency Coordination Group, a team of government and military agencies capable of intervening in troubled nations.

Army Col. Kevin Wright, who is helping develop the team, said the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, helped put the concept on the fast track. Wright expects to file a plan by January with his superiors, the next step toward getting the concept funded.

Eventually, Wright said, a fleet of military officers might be needed to help bridge gaps between the different cultures of the departments of Defense, State, the Treasury and others.

Effects-based operations could then become the norm, especially in less-developed countries in Africa, Eastern Europe and Southwest Asia.

"The JICG is [now] a bit of a pick-up team," Wright said, adding that servicemembers eventually may be trained to work with other agencies better.

"It's the way we have to go, I think," said Air Force Maj. David Poage, of EUCOM's Plans and Policy Directorate. "The future of war-fighting is not just war-fighting anymore."

"Now we want to set the environment."

E-mail Charlie Coon at: coon@main.estrates.osd.mil



GARY KIEFFER/Courtesy of the U.S. Army

The Joint Operations Center, nerve center of the European Plans and Operations Center — located at Patch Barracks in Stuttgart, Germany — is like a multiscreen indoor amphitheater where servicemembers from all branches and specialties come together to manage crisis situations that occur within the U.S. European Command's area of responsibility.

Africa eyed for intervention

STUTTGART, Germany — Africa has so many time bombs waiting to go off that stabilizing the continent is a major goal of the U.S. European Command.

The new style of intervention that EUCOM is pioneering, called "effect-based" warfare, aims to defuse the bombs before they blow.

"The shame of Africa is that most of the problems there are solvable," said Rear Adm. Hamlin Tallent, director of the European Plans and Operations Center.

The problems, Tallent added, are not going to be solved by using military might. EUCOM has instead hired experts from the departments of State, Treasury and Commerce, among others, to brainstorm solutions.

Their jobs are to help prepare pre-emptive strikes using intelligence, diplomacy and economics.

"We spend a lot of time determining what exactly you want to have an effect on," Tallent said. "It takes a lot of interagency input to do it right."

Despite its huge mineral and agricultural resources, the African continent seems to brew trouble. Some of the current crises include:

■ In the Darfur region of Sudan, an estimated

70,000 people have been killed and 1.6 million displaced by the violence between black Africans and pro-government Arab militias, according to U.N. figures.

■ Along the Rwanda-Congo border, factions are reportedly ready to renew a border war.

■ In sub-Saharan Africa, about 1.9 million children ages 15 and under have HIV or AIDS.

■ There are locust problems in Morocco and Mali, and drought in Ethiopia and Kenya.

"Africa is a victim — not of unwilling people — but of not having a detailed and funded strategy," Tallent said. "The complexities are so tremendous, and it takes so much energy to move the ball just an inch, that it's easy to fall away from it."

Military officials say Africa's instability and vast, ungoverned spaces make it susceptible to anti-U.S. extremism. If more African nations become stable, cooperate with one another and become self-sufficient, Tallent said, the whole world would benefit.

"How do you get to the people?" Tallent said. "What are you willing to do to have some kind of positive effect, given what you have to have through to get there? That is the challenge."

— Charlie Coon

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Secretary Donald Rumsfeld

Under-fire Rumsfeld gets some support

BY DAVID ESPO
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Senate's top two Republicans voiced support for Donald Rumsfeld on Friday as allies of the defense secretary sought to outflank increasingly vocal GOP critics in and out of Congress.

"I am confident that Secretary Rumsfeld is fully capable of leading the Department of Defense

and our military forces to victory in Iraq and the war on terror," Majority Leader Bill Frist, R-Tenn., said in a written statement. "Most importantly he has the confidence of his commanders in the field and our command-in-chief."

Mitch McConnell of Kentucky, the GOP whip, said Rumsfeld "is an excellent secretary of defense and we are fortunate to have a man of his courage and vision

serving the president at this critical time."

Frist and McConnell came to Rumsfeld's defense after several days of GOP criticism aimed at the man who has steered the Pentagon during the Iraq war and its messy aftermath. More than 1,300 American troops have died since the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq began in 2003.

None of Rumsfeld's congressional GOP critics has yet called

for his ouster. Still, they have grown increasingly outspoken in recent days, less than two weeks after the Senate House voted that the president wanted the defense secretary to remain in his post into a second term.

The increased criticism from Republicans also coincides with the aftermath of Rumsfeld's encounter with troops in Kuwait after the U.S. launched its military deployments and a lack of armored vehicles and other equipment.

"I'm not a fan of Secretary Rumsfeld," said Sen. Trent Lott in remarks to the Biloxi, Miss., Chamber of Commerce this week. "I don't think he listens enough to his uniformed officers." The Mississippi Republican said Bush should make a change at the Pentagon in the next year or so.

Sen. Susan Collins, R-Maine, released a letter to Rumsfeld asking why the Army had not moved more aggressively to produce fully armored Humvees for the troops in Iraq — an issue she said she had raised at a hearing nine months ago.

"I don't like the way he has done some things. I think they have been irresponsible," said Sen. Chuck Hagel of Nebraska. The Vietnam veteran alleged a long list of military offenses: "We didn't go into Iraq with enough troops. He's dismissed his general officers. He's dismissed all outside influence. He's dismissed outside counsel and advice. And he's dismissed a lot of inside counsel and advice from men and women who have been in military uniform for 25 and 30 years."

Sen. John McCain of Arizona said he had "no confidence" in the defense secretary, although he added that Bush "can have the team that he wants around him."

In the face of GOP criticism, White House spokesman Scott McClellan has been issuing declarations of presidential support on a regular basis.

"Secretary Rumsfeld is doing a great job leading our efforts at the Department of Defense to win the war on terrorism and to help bring about a free and peaceful Iraq," he said Friday. "And he's instrumental in our efforts during this time of war we are in."

Other than Frist and McConnell, David Keene of the American Conservative Union issued a statement of support during the day. He said much of the GOP criticism was "petty, coming from some who do not care for the secretary's blunt, plain-speaking style. ... It's also true that much of the criticism is really intended for President Bush but aimed at Rumsfeld."

In contrast to the presidential campaign, when Sen. John Kerry and other Democrats routinely called for Rumsfeld's ouster, much of the recent criticism has come from Republicans.

In part, that reflects the fact that the election is over and the president safely re-elected. It also stems from grievances nursed privately by lawmakers who feel Rumsfeld has not treated them with the deference they expect, GOP aides say.

Frist's brief written statement seemed to refer to such concerns. "I think it is important to not confuse style with substance," he said.



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Ready for the next mission



LARRY REILLY/Courtesy of the U.S. Army

Lt. Col. Glenn A. Kennedy II, 17th Signal Battalion commander, center, slides the casing cover over the battalion's colors to signify the end of its current mission. The colors will be uncased after the unit deploys to Iraq and begins its mission there. Assisting Kennedy at the ceremony, held Friday at Larson Barracks in Kitzingen, Germany, were battalion Command Sgt. Maj. Paul Grigsby, left, and Staff Sgt. Curtis Mosely, color guard noncommissioned officer in charge. The battalion will begin deploying early in January.

Officer to face trial in February for death of Iraqi

Capt. Rogelio M. Maynulet, a 1st Armored Division officer, will face trial in February on a charge of assault with intent to commit murder and dereliction of duty in the death of an unarmed and wounded Iraqi, a judge determined during a Friday arraignment.

The judge, Col. James Pohl, announced that the court would hear motions on Jan. 25, and the trial itself is scheduled for Feb. 22 through 25. It is tentatively to be held at Wiesbaden Army Airfield in Germany.

Maynulet did not enter a plea, said Maj. Michael Indovina, a 1st AD spokesman. Maynulet will face a maximum combined sentence of 20½ years.

Maynulet's tank company had fired shots at a car to end a May 21 car chase near Kufa, Iraq, wounding both the driver and passenger. Prosecutors say the 29-year-old Chicago native then murdered the driver, who had already had part of his skull blown away.

Fellow officers, however, say Maynulet killed the man as an act of mercy after a medic pulled him from the car. The soldiers believed the men were associates of radical Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr.

Maynulet is now assigned to the division's Headquarters and Headquarters Company.

Memorial held for Mannheim soldier

A memorial for Pfc. Joshua A. Ramsey, 19, a military policeman with the 95th MP Battalion, was held Friday in Mannheim, Germany, as well as on Thursday in Baghdad.

Ramsey, who is from Defiance, Ohio, died Dec. 12 in Baghdad from noncombat-related injuries. He is the second troop to die from the Mannheim community, according to the 293rd Base Support Battalion, based in Mannheim.

From staff reports

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Judges interrogate top Saddam officials

BY PAUL GARWOOD
The Associated Press

BAGHDAD — Iraqi judges interrogated the notorious general known as "Chemical Ali" — Saddam's former defense minister Saturday, opening the first phase in trials for the ousted dictator's top deputies. Insurgents meanwhile, attacked election offices and wounded four American contractors with a roadside bomb.

Ali Hassan al-Majid — who earned his nickname for his alleged use of chemical weapons against Kurds and others — appeared haggard in a video released after the interrogation, from which the press was barred. Sultan Hashim Ahmad, Saddam's last defense chief, stared blankly at the ground as police officers stood to either side of him holding his arms.

The two were the first to go before an investigative hearing from among the 11 jailed top figures who, along with Saddam, are facing trial for crimes during the regime's three decades in power.

Both were questioned by a panel of investigative judges in a hearing attended by their lawyers, said Raad al-Juhay, the head of the panel.

Al-Juhay said the defendants will face questioning over Saddam's Anfal campaign, a depopulation scheme that killed and expelled hundreds of thousands of Kurds from northern Iraq, including the 1988 Halabja chemical weapons attacks that al-Majid has been accused of ordering.

The judges will also investigate the role of the detainees in the bloody quelling of a 1991 Shiite uprising following the U.S.-led

Chemical Ali, former defense minister first questioned

Gulf War to force occupying Iraqi forces out of neighboring Kuwait, plus the illegal imprisonment and executions of political opponents.

"We should make a distinction between the trial and the investigation," al-Juhay said. "We are talking about the investigation."

The judge said there would be no rush in concluding the hearing and trial process against Saddam and his senior aides. "Hastiness is the plague of trials," al-Juhay said.

Iraqi deputy prime minister, Barham Saleh, told Al-Arabiya

TV that Ahmad was being quizzed primarily to assist in tribunal proceedings against al-Majid.

"The former defense minister is being interrogated within the framework of focusing on the case of Ali Hassan al-Majid, who

is accused of many crimes against the Iraqi people," Saleh said.

Interim Iraqi Prime Minister Ayad Allawi said Tuesday that detained leaders of Saddam's toppled regime would start appearing before court in the coming week — pressing ahead with the trials ahead of crucial national elections set for Jan. 30.



U.S. deaths in Iraq

The Associated Press

As of Friday, Dec. 17, 2004, at least 1,304 members of the U.S. military have died since the beginning of the Iraq war in March 2003, according to an Associated Press count. At least 1,021 died as a result of hostile action, the Defense Department said. The figures include three military civilians.

The AP count is four higher than the Defense Department's tally, updated Friday.

Since May 1, 2003, when President Bush declared that major combat operations in Iraq had ended, 1,166 U.S. military members have died, according to AP's count. That includes at least 912 deaths resulting from hostile action, according to the military.

The latest deaths reported by the military:

■ No new deaths reported. The latest identifications reported by the military:

■ Army Spc. Victor A. Martinez, 21, New York, died Tuesday from a gunshot south of Baghdad, Iraq, assigned to 364th Supply Company, 264th Corps Support Battalion, 1st Corps Support Command, Fort Bragg, N.C.

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Members of the Marines' Bridge Company A use bridge erection boats to retrieve a span of a completed bridge that had broken free and was floating down the Tigris River. When all spans have been built, the bridge will be put in place to allow better flow of convoys across the river.

'It's like a big Lego set'

Bridge-building Marines bring engineering expertise to nearly 30 projects across Iraq's dangerous rivers

BY RON JENSEN
Stars and Strips

AS SINDIYAH, Iraq — For a few Marines, the weapons of choice are sledgehammers, wrenches and elbow grease — lots of elbow grease.

They are the Marines of Bridge Company A, part of the 8th Engineer Support Battalion, and their singular status in the Corps makes up for a lot of sore muscles and aching backs.

"That is the best part about it," said Lance Cpl. Aaron Allen. "We are the only active-duty bridge company in the Marine Corps. That is a lot of motivation."

The Corps has two bridge companies in the reserves. They've been in Iraq and served six-month tours. Combat Marines typically spend seven months in Iraq. Bridge Company A came for 12 months.

They have built bridges, or taken them out, across Iraq for more than 10 months, about 25 or 30 of them, sometimes traveling hours from their home at Logistics Support Area Anacosta, 40 miles north of Baghdad.

When they do that, they work around-the-clock in 12-hour shifts until the job is complete.

The bridge they are building

now on the Tigris River, near the village of As Sindiya, is not far from Anacosta, so they can spend their nights on base.

This is their toughest bridge to date: a Mabey-Johnson bridge put together in sections and then assembled on the river. It's the first floating bridge the company has built in Iraq.

"It's like a big Lego set to us," said Staff Sgt. Marcellus Pickering.

For more than a year, a simple assault bridge has shouldered the heavy traffic load.

"This bridge is not meant for what it's doing," Pickering said, motioning toward the assault bridge that heaved and rolled each time a truck crossed.

The current bridge can support only one vehicle at a time, so convoys must stop on both sides of the river to cross, creating stationary targets.

When the Marines finish the new 340-meter bridge, convoys will be able to cross without stopping. They began work on it in November, and its expected completion date has not been announced due to security reasons.

While not exactly complaining, the bridge-building Marines don't

cheer every time they have to create something to cross a river.

"I don't like building bridges," said Cpl. Landon Genard, who is not alone in his sentiments.

No one seemed overjoyed by fastening 700-pound galvanized steel sections together with a 1,000-pound tension beam, driving in metal pins the size of a forearm with sledgehammers and twisting giant nuts and bolts to hold everything together.

"That galvanized steel is frickin' heavy," said Lance Cpl. Eric Laird, who has been with the company since he enlisted two years ago.

When a crane brought a section of the bridge to the Marines, they handled it into place.

"It's like a big puzzle you've got to put together," said Cpl. Philip Maxfield. "Nothing goes together perfectly. You've got to wiggle it." Once it had been wiggled into place, the pounding started. Sledgehammers slammed into steel, then again, until the pin slipped into place.

The best job in the company might be piloting one of the bridge erection boats, or BEBs. Each has two 250-horsepower engines that operate independently, allowing it to maneuver on the water much like a tracked vehicle does on land.

"This is the only boat that can rotate on its own axis," said



PHOTOS BY RON JENSEN/Stars and Stripes

Marine Lance Cpl. Nukane Souvannavanh prepares bridge panels for placement across the Tigris River in Iraq.

Lance Cpl. Brian Harvey. "You can sit in one spot and spin."

The boats push the floating sections into place so they can be fastened together. When one completed section broke away from a mooring recently, the boat's pilots raced to their boats like firemen responding to a call. They roared into the river and caught up with the fugitive piece of bridge, gently shoving it back to shore.

The bridge at As Sindiya is a multi-service effort. Air Force engineers designed the abutments and the roadway leading to the bridge on each side. Soldiers from the 502nd Engineer Battalion have provided security and often operated the crane that moves the heavy bridge pieces into place.

The Marines said they enjoy seeing the finished product, but don't revel in that sense of accomplishment too long.

"We all take a bridge picture and move on," said Pickering.

One reason the Marines don't spend too much time enjoying their handiwork is because they don't know how long the bridge may be around.

Allen recalled one time returning to Anacosta after building a bridge south of Baghdad.

"When we came back, we were all beat. They gave us a day off," Allen said. "When we woke up, they told us [the bridge] was blown up."

Other times, the Marines know they made a difference.

Laird recalled a bridge on Main Supply Route Tampa. Until that bridge was built, no supplies could get to the bases in northern Iraq by truck.

"We made it happen," he said.

E-mail Ron Jensen at: jensenr@mail.esrtripes.osd.mil

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AAFES sends movies to war zone

SpongeBob is off to war.

"The SpongeBob Squarepants Movie" is one of several titles troops downrange can see for free during the holidays.

The annual Army and Air Force Exchange Service/Hollywood Holiday Film Festival runs through Jan. 7 at bases in the Balkans, the Middle East and Southwest Asia.

The festival will show first-run flicks in 35 mm to U.S. troops stationed in the Balkans, Camp Doha, Kuwait, and Balad, Iraq. Troops in more remote locations will see video copies of the films.

The movies include "The Incredibles," "National Treasure," "Alfie," "Christmas with the Kranks" and "Alexander."

Advance VHS versions of Mr. Squarepants' opus and "Alfie," "Kinsey," "Sideways" and "Flight of the Phoenix" will be shown at posts without theaters.

"We were very excited about the films lined up for this year's film festival," said Richard Sheff, Vice President of AAFES Food and Theater Division, in a prepared statement. "As in the past, AAFES' motion picture partners all agreed that it would be a great gesture of support to those service members defending our country, and in the best holiday tradition, to offer the films free of charge."

The film companies all agreed to waive their normal royalty fees for the festival.

Germany expands Iraqi training

BERLIN — Germany will provide training for Iraqi officers, send ambulances and equipment for a military hospital and help set up an engineering unit as it expands efforts to support the new Iraqi military in early 2005, the Defense Ministry said Saturday.

Germany was an outspoken opponent of

the U.S.-led war in Iraq and refuses to send troops to the country.

But it has trained Iraqi police officers in the United Arab Emirates and last month launched a program to train Iraqi military drivers and mechanics.

The Defense Ministry said Germany and Iraq agreed to expand the program during a visit to Berlin Thursday and Friday by Iraq's deputy defense minister, Bruska Shaways.

Iraqi officers will receive training in Germany to prepare them for "their tasks in the new, democratically controlled Iraqi military," according to a ministry statement.

It said Berlin also plans to provide Iraq with equipment for a military hospital and "a large number" of ambulances.

Germany also will help train and equip a new engineering unit, and Iraq is considering an offer to train experts in explosives disposal in Germany, the statement said.

From staff and wire reports

IN THE WORLD

Turks celebrate bid for EU membership

BY SELCAN HACAOGU

The Associated Press

ANKARA, Turkey — Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan returned here from a European Union summit Saturday, telling his countrymen amid a shower of confetti and fireworks that Turkey "has turned the critical junction" on the way to becoming a member of the group.

EU leaders reluctantly agreed Friday to consider Turkey for membership despite widespread public misgivings about welcoming a poor and densely populated Muslim nation into the bloc.

If the talks succeed, Turkey would become the largest EU member, with a population of 71 million — expected to grow as high as 85 million by 2020. But its per capita income is roughly one-third of the average of longtime EU member states, requiring far-reaching economic reforms.

Supporters presented Erdogan with flow-

ers after his airplane touched down at Ankara's Esenboga airport, and some 5,000 gathered in near-freezing weather to greet Erdogan in the city's central square.

"Turkey has turned the critical junction," Erdogan told the crowd, whose members were waving flags and balloons with Turkish and EU symbols. "Our road is open, you should not have any doubt about it."

Supporters showered Erdogan with confetti as he started to speak and set off fireworks after he finished.

EU leaders have imposed tough conditions on Turkish membership.

Turkey will have to recognize Cyprus before the talks open in October and will be required to record progress on key issues such as Kurdish rights, improving the economy and limiting the military's influence in politics. Ankara is also expected to treat ethnic and religious minorities equally.

EU officials said the talks would be open-ended and without a guarantee of eventual EU membership. Opposition lead-



A child holds balloon bearing the Turkish and EU emblems, among a crowd welcoming Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan as he returned to Ankara on Saturday.

ers said that gave Turkey little chance of success.

The deal nearly fell apart because of an EU requirement that Turkey initial an agreement Friday expanding its customs union with the EU to include Cyprus and nine other members that joined in May.

The agreement would have to be signed by October.

U.S., EU make early-morning climate deal

The Associated Press

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina — In a U.N. conference's final hours, the United States and the European Union worked out a modest deal early Saturday to inch ahead in the international efforts to put a cap on global warming.

The Americans avoided any commitment to negotiate mandatory reductions in carbon dioxide emissions, something President Bush rejected in 2001 when he renounced the Kyoto Protocol, which requires rollbacks in other industrial nations by 2012.

On their side, the Europeans won a new forum for discussing just that — a "seminar" next May at which governments can informally raise a range of climate issues, including next steps on emissions control after 2012.

"The only thing we want to discuss is future options, and we will," said a key EU negotiator, Pieter van Geel, the Dutch environment secretary.

If they do, U.S. diplomats are sure to ignore them. That was one reason other Europeans saw the Buenos Aires agreement as at best a small step to keep the multilateral process moving on climate change.

EU wrestles with anti-Semitism laws

BY FRANCES D'EMILIO

The Associated Press

ROME — Europe's new justice commissioner said Wednesday he will lobby European Union countries for a continent-wide law cracking down on anti-Semitism.

Franco Frattini told a conference on anti-Semitism hosted by his home country's Foreign Ministry that "Europe has the right, and perhaps the duty, to propose to members a common base ... to strike at and punish racism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism."

"Europe can, with unity, approve a common European rule which will ... oblige all countries to adopt a law," Frattini said.

Europe already is trying an EU-wide approach to tackling such problems as international terrorism, for example, pushing for all states to accept European-wide arrest warrants for that crime. The conference, called to explore the effects of anti-Jewish actions on democracy, also heard a prominent U.S. journalist assert that the pervasiveness of anti-Semitism in Europe is widely underestimated in the United States, even by U.S. Jews.

"Americans have a hard time understanding the grip that anti-Semitism has on the imagination, even American Jews have a hard time understanding the grip it has" on European opinion, said Martin Peretz, editor-in-chief of the New Republic, a weekly political journal.

The daily conference was sponsored by the Anti-Defamation League and Il Foglio, an Italian third-piece newspaper.

Spain's former Foreign Minis-



Abraham H. Foxman, national director of the U.S. Anti-Defamation League, left, and Barbara Balser, ADL national chairperson, greet Italian Lower Chamber chairman Pierferdinando Casini as he arrives for the conference on anti-Semitism in Rome.

ter Ana Palacio urged Europe to be more diligent in rooting out anti-Semitism that may try to mask itself as freedom of speech.

"As democracies we have to draw a clear line" between legitimate right to criticize the policies of Israel and anti-Semitism, Palacio said. On Wednesday night, before conference delegates, Italian Foreign Minister Gianfranco Fini delivered a ringing denunciation of anti-Semitism.

Il Foglio editor Giuliano Ferrara said that since the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks "anti-Semitism is linked to a strong anti-American" ideology that has "conquered a large space not only in some European chancelleries but also a large space in public opinion."

New York Times columnist David Brooks, who is Jewish, traced a surge in anti-Semitism in the United States in the last three years.

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IN THE STATES

Judge blocks new ballots in Wash. election

BY REBECCA COOK
The Associated Press

TACOMA, Wash. — A judge ruled it's too late for a county to reconsider hundreds of recently discovered ballots which could prove pivotal in the closest governor's race in state history.

Pierce County Superior Court Judge Stephanie Arend granted a request from the state Republican Party to block the counting of the King County ballots, 150 of which were discovered Friday.

From reading state law and state Supreme Court decisions,

"it is clear to me that it is not appropriate to go back and revisit decisions on whether ballots should or should not be counted," Arend said.

Democrats appealed to the state Supreme Court, and King County Elections Director Dean Logan said the county also planned to appeal. Chief Justice Gerry Alexander said the high court is prepared to take up the case next week.

With all but King County finished with a hand recount, Republican Dino Rossi was leading Democrat Christine Gregoire by 50 votes.

Rossi spokeswoman Mary Lane said the judge made the right decision. "If King County were allowed to keep adding more ballots, elections would never end," Lane said.

As for those whose ballots aren't counted, she said: "That is King County's fault. We cannot be held responsible for the fact that King County made a mistake."

Rossi won the Nov. 2 election over Gregoire by 261 votes in the first count and by 42 after a machine recount of the 2.9 million votes cast.

Additional votes have been tallied in a hand recount sought by Democrats. King County officials and Democrats want to include 723 newfound ballots in the hand recount, saying they are valid ballots that were mistakenly rejected because of county workers' errors.

"From the beginning, this has been about fixing mistakes and counting every legitimate ballot," Gregoire said in a statement Friday. "The people of Washington deserve an accurate count."

Republicans sued, saying it was too late to add ballots to the recount now.

Arend granted the GOP a temporary restraining order to stop election workers from taking the newly discovered ballots out of their outer envelopes, which bear the voter's signature. County elections officials had said ballots would not be separated from their security envelopes until the lawsuit was decided.

Jack Oxford is one of the voters whose ballots Arend said should not be counted. "She said, 'Jack, your vote doesn't count,'" said Oxford, 50, an electrical field supervisor from Enumclaw. "I'm very upset, very distressed."

Powell still planning to stay in public life

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — With only about a month left as America's top diplomat, Secretary of State Colin Powell says he has no sure plans for the future. But he says "doors will open and some of them I will go through."

In a farewell interview on Friday, Powell virtually ruled out taking another full-time govern-

ment job, although he said, "I will be in public life in some way."

"I've still got some treadwear left on me," the 67-year-old career soldier-diplomat said.

Known to have a strong interest in promoting education among disadvantaged children, Powell said, "I'm interested in any child being left behind."

"I wouldn't be surprised if

working in the field of mentoring or education or something like that does not appear on my calendar," he said.

Looking back on nearly four years as secretary of state, Powell expressed no regret for using ultimately flawed and exaggerated claims about Saddam Hussein's weapons stockpiles to ask the United Nations last year to back war with Iraq.

Woman accused of killing pregnant mom, taking baby

The Associated Press

MARYVILLE, Mo. — A baby girl who had been cut out of her mother's womb was found after a frantic search, and authorities arrested the woman they say strangled the mother and stole the child. The baby was in good condition Saturday.

The child was found Friday at an eastern Kansas home. A red Toyota similar to a description given earlier by police was in the driveway. Lisa M. Montgomery, 36, of Melvern, Kan., was arrested later Friday and charged with kidnapping resulting in death.

Bobbie Jo Stinnett, 23, was found Thursday in a pool of blood inside her small white home in Skidmore, a town in northwest Missouri. Stinnett, who was eight months pregnant, had earlier been talking with her mother on the phone, and hung up saying a woman she had chatted with online had just arrived at her door, authorities said.

U.S. Attorney Todd Graves said Montgomery contacted Stinnett through an online message board, and authorities zeroed in on her using computer forensics. Montgomery was seeking to buy a dog from Stinnett, who raised rat terriers, he said.

Stinnett, married for little more than a year and expecting her first child, worked at an engine factory in nearby Maryville. Her husband was at work when she was killed, authorities said.

The baby was named Victoria Jo and was united with her father, Zeb Stinnett, late Friday, Stormont-Vail Regional Health Center in Topeka said in a statement Saturday on its Web site. She was listed in good condition at the hospital's neonatal intensive care unit.

Zeb Stinnett called the girl "a miracle." "I want to thank family, friends, Amber Alert and law enforcement officials for their support during this time," Stinnett said in the news release.

Montgomery is the mother of



Bobbie Jo Stinnett is shown in an undated photo. Stinnett, 23, who was pregnant, was found slain in her Missouri home on Thursday. A baby girl, who apparently was cut from Stinnett's womb, was found in good health on Friday, and a suspect was in custody, authorities said.

two high school-age children, but Graves said she had been pregnant with another child that was never born.

It's unclear when she lost the baby or under what circumstances, but the complaint said she had lied to her husband about giving birth. Graves declined to give a motive for the crime.

According to the criminal complaint, Montgomery traveled about 40 miles to Topeka, Kan., on Thursday to go shopping. Her husband received a call from her saying she had gone into labor and given birth.

Kevin Montgomery and the couple's two children met Lisa and the newborn at a parking lot in Topeka and drove home, according to the affidavit.

The next day, authorities say, Montgomery confessed that she strangled Stinnett from behind, cut her open, removed the baby and cut her umbilical cord. She also admitted that she lied to her husband about what happened.



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Dr. Hatfill subpoenas newspapers for sources

BY SAM HANANEL
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The scientist described by government officials as a "person of interest" in the 2001 anthrax attacks wants reporters to identify sources who provided them information about the Justice Department's investigation.

Dr. Steven Hatfill sent subpoenas to The Associated Press and other news organizations that produced stories about him based on government leaks.

The AP received its subpoena late Thursday. It asks for all documents relating to Hatfill that the AP received from any federal employee. It also seeks to depose an AP representative in February.

AP will oppose the subpoena, said assistant general counsel Dave Tomlin.

Hatfill's lawyer, Patrick O'Donnell, would not disclose which organizations were subpoenaed.

On October 2001 anthrax attacks killed five people and sickened 17 others.

Pfizer to continue selling Celebrex

FDA issues warning about popular pain reliever

BY THERESA AGOVINO
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — The U.S. Food and Drug Administration is advising doctors to consider alternatives to pain reliever Celebrex in the wake of a study that showed it increased the risk of heart attack and strokes at high doses.

Pfizer Inc. said Friday it will leave Celebrex on the market, although the same problems led Merck & Co. to withdraw its painkiller Vioxx from the market in September.

"We're leaving open all regulatory decisions as we move forward. But we do not have a decision on the fate of the product," Acting FDA Commissioner Lester Crawford said Friday.

"We do have great concern about this product (Celebrex) and the class of products," Crawford said doctors should think about other types of drugs to help patients relieve pain. Doctors said they were already inundated with calls from nervous patients and were pledging to curtail their use of the drug.

The disclosure sent Pfizer's stock tumbling Friday amid fears it would cripple sales of what had been the most-prescribed drug for treating arthritis. Shares of Pfizer, the world's largest pharmaceutical maker, plunged \$3.23, to close at \$25.75 on the New York Stock Exchange. The decline wiped out almost \$25 billion of Pfizer's market value.

Both Celebrex and Vioxx are a type of drug called cox-2 inhibitors. Vioxx was pulled from the market in September because it doubled patients' risk of heart attack and stroke.

"I think the trial concludes the controversy about whether there is a class effect of these

drugs. Now there is clear evidence of it," said Dr. Garret A. Fitzgerald, a cardiologist at the University of Pennsylvania.

National Institutes of Health director Dr. Elias Zerhouni said that he ordered a full review of the more than 40 agency-supported studies involving cox-2 inhibitors.

The National Cancer Institute, which was conducting the study for Pfizer, said patients in the clinical trial taking 800 milligrams of Celebrex had a 3.4 times greater risk of cardiovascular events compared to a placebo. For patients in the trial taking 400 milligrams of Celebrex the risk was 2.5 times greater. The average duration of treatment in the trial was 33 months.

In the 2,000 patient study, 15 individuals taking 400 mgs, 20 patients taking 800 mgs and 6 patients on placebo suffered either a cardiac-related death, heart attack or stroke.

The study was intended to show whether Celebrex could prevent precancerous growths called polyps in patients that had already had at least one such growth.

A separate cancer study done by Pfizer found no increased heart risk with patients taking 400mg of Celebrex per day.

Pfizer chairman and chief executive Hank McKinnell, who takes Celebrex, told CNN's Paula Zahn that he plans to continue using the drug. Dr. Joseph Fecko, president of worldwide development for Pfizer, said the results in the trial finding increased risk of heart attacks were inconsistent with the other cancer prevention trial and a "large body of data" that the company had collected.

Fecko said that sales of Celebrex will continue because "it has not shown in totality that it increases the risk of heart attacks."



Pfizer Inc. said Friday that it has found an increased risk of heart problems with patients taking its painkiller Celebrex, left, a drug that is in the same class as the Vioxx, which was pulled from the market in September because of safety concerns.

3 more arrested in Md. residential arson case

BY BRIAN WITTE
The Associated Press

GREENBELT, Md. — Three more people were arrested Saturday in connection with the largest residential arson in Maryland history, a collection of blazes that caused \$10 million in damage to new houses in an upscale development near a nature preserve.

The three men were arrested early Saturday, said a federal law enforcement official who spoke on condition of anonymity.

All three were charged under federal law with arson, said the official, who would not discuss a possible motive.

Charges previously were filed against Aaron L. Speed, who told police he was upset by the way he had been treated by his employer.

Speed, 21, who worked for Security Services of America Inc., came under suspicion after allegedly failing a polygraph and telling investigators he was home in bed when a colleague phoned to tell him of the fires.

Records obtained from his cell phone service showed the call went through a cell phone tower closer to the scene, according to court documents.

According to an affidavit, Speed told authorities "that he was present at the location, along with others with whom he was acquainted, while the fires were being lit."

Records released Friday sug-

gest the motive may have been more emotional than political. Speed told investigators he was upset that his employer did not show enough sympathy after his infant son died this year.

Speed had been hired to protect the Hunters Brooke development, where fires Dec. 6 destroyed 10 houses and damaged 16 others. The fires broke out almost simultaneously over a 10-acre site, leading investigators to believe that more than one person may have been responsible.

Early on, there was speculation the fires were set by environmental extremists, because some environmental groups had complained the houses threatened a nearby bog.

Speed appeared in court Friday, and U.S. Magistrate William Connelly appointed a public defender to represent him. He is next due in court Tuesday.

Speed's attorney, John C. Chumble, and his relatives declined Friday to comment at the courthouse. Security Services of America has said only that it is cooperating with authorities.

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AARP poll finds most favor medical use of pot



Nearly three-fourths of older Americans support legalizing marijuana for medical use, according to a poll done for the nation's largest advocacy group for seniors.

BY ELIZABETH WOLFE
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Nearly three-fourths of older Americans support legalizing marijuana for medical use, according to a poll done for the nation's largest advocacy group for seniors.

More than half of those questioned said they believe marijuana has medical benefits, while a larger majority agreed the drug is addictive.

AARP, with 35 million members, says it has no political position on medical marijuana and that its local branches have not chosen sides in the scores of state ballot initiatives on the issue in recent elections.

But with medical marijuana at the center of a Supreme Court case to be decided next year, and nearly a dozen states with medi-

cal marijuana laws on their books, AARP decided to study the issue.

"The use of medical marijuana applies to many older Americans who may benefit from cannabis," said Ed Dwyer, an editor at AARP The Magazine, which will discuss medical marijuana in its March/April issue appearing in late January.

Among the 1,706 adults polled in AARP's random telephone survey in November, opinions varied along regional and generational lines and among the 30 percent of respondents who said they have smoked pot. AARP members represented 37 percent of respondents.

Overall, 72 percent of respondents agreed "adults should be allowed to legally use marijuana for medical purposes if a physician recommends it." Those in the Northeast (79 percent) and West (82 percent) were more receptive to the idea than in the Midwest (67 percent) and Southwest (65 percent). In Southern states, 70 percent agreed with the statement.

Though 69 percent of those age 70 and older said they support legal medical marijuana use, less than half agreed it has medical benefits. Seventy percent of respondents age 45-49 said they believe in the medical benefits of pot, as did 59 percent of those in the 50-69 age group.

And while 74 percent of all people surveyed said pot is addictive, older respondents were more likely to think so: 83 percent of those 70 and older, compared with 61 percent of those ages 45-49.

Generational lines also divided those who have smoked pot: Just

Marijuana math

On doc's orders: A poll for AARP of adults age 45 and older found nearly three-fourths of them support legalizing marijuana for medical use.

The numbers: More than half of those questioned said they believe marijuana has medical benefits, while a larger majority agreed the drug is addictive.

Difference of opinion: Responses varied along regional and generational lines, and among the 30 percent of those who said they've smoked pot. Overall, 74 percent of respondents said marijuana is addictive, including 83 percent of those age 70 and older and 61 percent of the 45-49 age group.

The Associated Press

8 percent of those 70 and older admitted having lit up, compared with 58 percent of the 45-49 group, 37 percent of those between 50 and 59 and 15 percent of the 60-69 set.

Last month, the Supreme Court heard arguments over whether federal agents can pursue sick people who use homegrown marijuana with their doctors' permission and their states' approval.

The Bush administration has argued that allowing medical marijuana in California would undermine federal drug control programs, and that pot grown for medical use could end up on the illegal market and cross state lines.

The AARP poll of adults age 45 and older was conducted Nov. 10-11 by the Harrisburg, Pa.-based International Communications Research. The margin of sampling error was plus or minus 2.5 percentage points.

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Battle brews after Bud gets networks to pull Miller ads

BY XIAO ZHANG
The Associated Press

MILWAUKEE — Television networks CBS and NBC decided to pull three ads by Miller Brewing Co. after a complaint from rival Anheuser-Busch Cos., the two brewers confirmed Friday.

The move came after St. Louis-based Anheuser-Busch filed a 26-page complaint with four major networks Nov. 2, saying nine Miller ads aired since the summer are unsubstantiated and misleading.

Two of the three ads to be pulled had a line of people shouting into a megaphone outside Anheuser-Busch that Miller Lite or Miller Genuine Draft had more flavor or more taste than Bud Light and Budweiser.

The ads have been used since late October or early November, according to Milwaukee-based Miller.

The third ad shows a Budweiser delivery person wearing Capri pants entering a bar, which has been airing since mid-October.

CBS said the ads were "disparaging" of Bud Light and Budweiser and that the network would stop running them at the end of the month.

NBC said in a statement Friday

the ads were valid but "went beyond the substantiation and communicated a taste superiority and/or preference."

Anheuser-Busch said Miller's taste-testing comparing the two brewers' products, on which several Miller ads are based, is flawed and biased.

"We think (the networks) made the right decision because (Miller parent company) SABMiller struggled with telling the truth," said Michael Owens, Anheuser-Busch's vice president of sales and marketing.

But a Miller spokesman said the networks sided with Miller's taste-testing methodology because they did not pull all ads in the past nine months.

The two networks also disapproved of two ads that went off the air in the end of July. Other Miller ads will continue to air.

Both brewers said they hadn't heard from the two other networks as of Friday afternoon.

Friday's events were the latest spat between the nation's two biggest brewers.

Anheuser-Busch, the world's biggest brewer, held 50 percent of the U.S. beer market last year. Miller, the world's second-largest brewer by volume, had 18 percent.



Left: Bernhard Goetz arrives at Central Booking in Manhattan in handcuffs and escorted by police on March 28, 1985. Goetz shot four youths in the New York subway on Dec. 22, 1984. Right: Darrell Cabey waits for Goetz's testimony in state Supreme Court on April 12, 1996, in New York. Cabey was one of the youths shot by Goetz inside the subway car. The shooting left him paralyzed.

AP photos

20 years after Goetz shooting, NYC subway crime at all-time low

By LARRY MC SHANE

The Associated Press

NEW YORK — It was a suburban explosion, a cataclysmic meeting of all the wrong elements. A gun-toting white man and four panhandling black youths, all inside a subway car in an era where crime beneath the city streets far outpaced justice above.

On Dec. 22, 1984, Bernhard Goetz rose from his seat on the No. 2 train in Manhattan, shot the teens and ignited a national furor over hot-button issues from racism to gun control.

"You don't look so bad," the shooter told one wounded youth, who wound up paralyzed. "Here's another."

Twenty years later, with subway crime at historic lows and New York once again a hit with tourists, the tale of the subway gunman exists mostly as an artifact of a far different city in a far different time.

"Could it happen now?" asked attorney Ron Kuby, who won a \$43 million civil suit against Goetz on behalf of victim Darrell Cabey.

"Inconceivable. Inconceivable that the attack would take place. Inconceivable that the attacker would be hailed as a hero."

Former NYPD chief of detectives Richard Nicastro echoed Kuby's feelings.

It's hard to imagine it happening again," said Nicastro, who retired in 1998. "What it showed was the fear most people had in traveling alone."

Goetz turned himself in to police in Concord, N.H., on New Year's Eve.

At the time, there was an average of 15,000 felonies a year

in the subway — more than 40 every day around the nation's largest mass transit system. Twenty years later, those figures are the ghosts of subways past. Through Nov. 14 this year, there were just 2,760 felonies reported — barely eight per day. Murders in the subways, which topped out at 26 in 1990, are at zero for four years.

In 1984, the subways were decorated in spray-painted graffiti tags and inhabited by muggers, junkies, panhandlers and the homeless. Track fires and train breakdowns became standard fare. But it was out-of-control crime in filthy trains and frightening stations that inflicted the heaviest wounds to the city psyche.

"The subways are everybody's second neighborhood," said Thomas Repetto, a police historian who heads the Citizens Crime Commission. "If you live in Brooklyn, and see a story about a robbery in the Bronx, you think, 'Gee, that's terrible.'"

"But if there's a story about a robbery in the subway, you think, 'Whoa, I ride down there.'"

Goetz was cleared of attempted murder charges in 1987 and spent 250 days in jail the same year for a weapons conviction in 1986. In 1996, a Bronx jury awarded Cabey \$43 million in his civil suit against Goetz.

The Cabey family never received one cent from Goetz, and Darrell Cabey remains trapped in a wheelchair.

Goetz, a reluctant celebrity at best, slipped into obscurity and resurfaced, infamously, when he mugged a doomed 2001 campaign for mayor.

Associated Press Writer Tom Hays contributed to this report.

Survey: FDA drug checks every agency's scientists

By PAUL REGER

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — About two-thirds of Food and Drug Administration scientists are less than fully confident in the agency's monitoring of the safety of prescription drugs now being sold, according to an FDA internal survey.

Also, more than one-third of those scientists have some doubts about the process for approving new drugs, the survey found.

The survey was conducted by the Health and Human Services' Office of Inspector General. Complete results were released to the public only after an advocacy group filed a Freedom of Information Act request. The release comes in the wake of safety concerns forcing removal from the market of Vioxx, an arthritis drug, and congressional testimony by an FDA scientist, Dr. David Graham, that the agency mishandled safety concerns about five other drugs.

"By all appearances, FDA would not be sorry about this," said Rebecca Ross, director of the Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility, which obtained the survey through the FOIA request. "These results show that many of Dr. Graham's concerns share his concerns, but that those warnings are falling on deaf ears."

An agency spokesman, Brad Stone, said the survey was commissioned in 2001 and was 2 years old. He said the survey confirmed that FDA medical reviewers believe the drug decisions "appropriately assess the safety and effectiveness of drugs and the process allows for open in-depth scientific debate."

"The survey raises significant issues about drug safety and ongoing monitoring of adverse health impacts of drugs in the marketplace."

Kathleen Rest

Executive director of the Union of Concerned Scientists

Stone said that "as with any institution" there may be individuals who may "ultimately disagree with a consensus scientific judgment for a variety of reasons."

"Nevertheless, FDA is required to base its decisions on the best available, verifiable science," Stone said a statement.

The survey sought the opinion of about 400 FDA scientists about the process of evaluating and approving prescription drugs. A majority of the scientists said they were "completely confident" or

"mostly confident" about the FDA's decisions about the safety and efficacy of drugs approved for sale. But 31 percent were only "somewhat confident" and five percent had no confidence in the safety decisions.

About 66 percent of the experts surveyed said they were not at all confident or only somewhat confident that the FDA adequately monitors the safety of prescription drugs once they are on the market.

"The survey raises significant issues about drug safety and ongoing monitoring of adverse health impacts of drugs in the marketplace," said Kathleen Rest, executive director of the Union of Concerned Scientists, a group that posted the full survey on its Web site.

Vioxx was pulled from the market on Sept. 30 by its manufacturer, Merck & Co., after a study indicated the popular pain reliever doubled the risk of heart attacks and stroke when taken for longer than 18 months.

The survey also asked the scientists if they had ever been pressured to approve a drug even though they had reservations about its safety, efficacy or quality.

Of 360 responses, 297, or 82 percent, of the scientists said they did not feel they had been pressured. Fifty-three, or 18 percent, said they did come under such pressure.

NRC: New firearms research needed

WASHINGTON — A new analysis of efforts to control violence by restricting guns says there is not enough evidence to reach valid conclusions about their effectiveness.

The National Research Council said Thursday that a major research program on firearms is needed.

"Policy choices related to gun ownership and proposals for gun control touch on some of the most contentious issues in American politics," Charles F. Wofford, chairman of the committee that wrote the report, said in a statement.

Among the major questions needing answers are whether there should be restrictions on who may possess firearms, on the number or types of guns that can be purchased, and whether safety locks should be required, said Wofford, professor of criminal justice at the University of Maryland.

Mock evacuation does not go 'well'

BATTLEBORO, Vt. — A mock evacuation of Brattleboro schools intended to simulate what would happen during a disaster at the nearby Vermont Yankee nuclear power plant, went "not that well," in the words of the superintendent.

Too few school buses from New Hampshire arrived Thursday at Brattleboro Union High School to carry the number of students who would have had to been taken to an evacuation site, two top school officials said.

"If there are problems like this, then it's not a viable plan," schools Superintendent Ronald Stahley said after the evacuation drill, which his district's Vermont Emergency Management division monitored the exercise and, although it still was collecting data about how well it went, conceded that

there weren't enough bus seats for the number of students at Brattleboro schools.

Stanley and Tim Stevenson, a counselor in the special education department at Brattleboro Union High, said the drill turned up several problems.

"Without an adequate evacuation plan — and that's clearly what this showed — this whole business of the urgent becomes even more scary for those who live in the zone here," Stevenson said.

Kerik did not fill out background

NEW YORK — Bernard Kerik, who withdrew his nomination for homeland security secretary after disclosing that he had not paid all required taxes for a nanny, did not fill out a background form when he was appointed New York City police commissioner in 2000, city officials said.

The Department of Investigation said it is examining Kerik's tenure as head of the New York City Police Department under former Mayor Rudolph Giuliani but declined to cite specifics.

"DOI is absolutely seeking facts and doing interviews and looking for answers," the department said in a statement Thursday.

Castro's granddaughter U.S. citizen

MIAMI — Cuban President Fidel Castro's granddaughter, who fled to Miami in 1993, has become an U.S. citizen.

Alina Salgado, 26, is the daughter of Alina Fernandez, Castro's daughter living in exile in the United States.

Salgado was sworn in at the Miami Beach Convention Center on Wednesday, among 6,000 people who became Americans during two naturalization ceremonies. She refused to comment.

From The Associated Press

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Keep religion, state separate

I cannot believe the two letters ("They weren't religionists" and "Column won't be printed," both Dec. 15) beating up on the writer of the Dec. 6 letter on religious extremists and separation of church and state. ("All religious fanatics a threat").

The first letter tried to push all past atrocities in the world onto the liberal atheists and others there. The letter is absurd for a million reasons, including: all liberals are not atheists; the misstatements of history removed religious involvement in the atrocities of old; and the failure to reference modern atrocities such as those in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo, which were almost purely religious-based.

As for the poor attempt at a history lesson. If "They weren't religionists," the writer should read the North Korean constitution to find out if that country has an official religion, or if it has separation of church and state. That said, he should also realize that Kim Il Sung and family are considered deities, which is a cultist religion in itself despite the Buddhists, Christians and other religions in the country. So if North Korea has atrocities toward Christians or anyone else, this too would be an act of extremist religionists.

The writer makes the same flaws in logic when discussing Josef Stalin. Again, I recommend using some non-700-Club-provided sources to check the involvement of the Russian Orthodox Church in history, plus Stalin's own cultist personality that, like Kim Il Sung, made him basically a god. Again an extremist.

As for the reference to the Founding Fathers by the writer of "Column won't be printed": It is great that he has read so many of their personal letters, but the rest of America has read the important things they wrote — the Constitution and Bill of Rights. In these documents they created separation of church and state — maybe not in those terms, but clearly expressed. The greatness of the men was demonstrated by their establishment of a country based not on personal beliefs in slavery, religion or taxation, which ran the gamut, but instead on lofty goals that could last.

So good for the writer of "All religious fanatics a threat" for noting the danger from a growing extremist threat from some reli-

Tell us what you think

Stars and Stripes welcomes your comments on editorials and columns that are published in the newspaper, and values letters on topics of importance in the lives of our readers. All letters must be signed, and must include the writer's address or base and telephone number. Please limit all letters to 300 words. We reserve the right to edit letters for length, taste and clarity.

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gions. We are fighting a war over this extremism now, and cannot let the great vision of the Founding Fathers falter and be replaced by similar extremists in our own country.

Maj. Phil Franklin
 Stuttgart, Germany

Soldiers' penalty unjustified

I am shocked and appalled at the actions taken by the battalion commander of the 656th Transportation Company concerning the six reservists who used parts from abandoned vehicles to complete their mission of delivering fuel ("6 GIs court-martialed for taking vehicles in Kuwait," article, Dec. 14).

What was this commander thinking? His men were ordered to do a job that is vital to the mission and extremely dangerous in itself. To send soldiers out into the desert loaded down with gasoline in ill-equipped vehicles is an act of an ill-equipped unit. Commanders should always be aware of their soldiers' needs, especially the condition of their vehicles. Those vehicles are the key to completing any mission. If other soldiers abandoned vehicles because they were broken down or damaged in some kind of attack, then where is the crime in using abandoned parts to complete a mission that is critical to the war?

The article goes on to say that the troops

should have returned the vehicles to their original units. Let me get this straight: While sitting in the desert with broken-down fuel trucks(8), the soldiers' responsibility was to switch missions to return another unit's abandoned vehicles? All the while sitting like a time bomb waiting to come under attack?

This story comes after Spc. Thomas Wilson asked Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld why more combat vehicles were not reinforced for battle. It's a shame in today's Army that our soldiers are fighting a war in which they must resort to scrounging scrap metal to "stealing" parts in order to reinforce a vehicle that ultimately might save their lives.

It makes me sick to my stomach to read about the Army charging these soldiers with theft, destruction of Army property and conspiracy to cover up their "crimes." And then to go as far as booting them out with a dishonorable discharge and stripping them of all military benefits? In my opinion, sending troops out with ill-equipped vehicles is more of a crime.

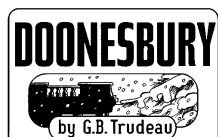
Shana Harris
 Naples, Italy

Army should honor contracts

I am glad the writer of the letter "Serving past your ICIS" (Dec. 13) wants to carry out his family's military tradition and has served 15 years in the National Guard. However, there are some reservists and Guardsmen who actually signed an eight-year contract with every intention of serving just what we signed. Those individuals filing a lawsuit against the Army have every right to sue, since the Army is in breach of contract.

The writer has the audacity to bring in the seven Army values in response to our "gripping" about getting sent to Iraq after we served out our contract. If we wanted to go active-duty we would have, but we chose to pursue a civilian education outside of the military life that, frankly, is not for everyone. Even though I have two loans, a scholarship and a work-study job, there was not enough for college bills, which is when the military came in. Get a job at Burger King? Have the writer do that and try to pay for college. Let me know how it goes.

Sgt. Meredith York
 Logistics Support Area Anaconda, Iraq



OPINION

What newspapers are saying at home

The following editorial excerpts are selected from a cross section of newspapers throughout the United States. The editorials are provided by The Associated Press and other statewide syndicates.

Tough to adapt on the fly
Chicago Tribune

War is an inherently unpredictable enterprise. History is replete with examples of tactics and weapons that work well in one conflict, only to prove fatally obsolete in the next. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld struggled to make that point to soldiers in Kuwait. ...

The Pentagon is scrambling to adjust to the unforeseen hazards of the Iraq occupation. ... The basic mistake in this instance was expecting an orderly aftermath, a speedy handover of power to Iraqis, and an early American withdrawal. When Rumsfeld said, "You go to war with the army you have ... not the army you might want or wish to have at a later time," he might have added that the force that invaded Iraq in March 2003 was perfectly equipped to destroy the Iraqi army and topple its dictator. ...

But a military designed for tank battles in the desert against a traditional enemy is not necessarily ideal for a guerrilla war in alien territory, which is what Iraq has become. ...

With better planning and more attention to uncertainties by civilian leaders, maybe it won't have to do so much adapting in the next war.

U.N. status quo poor symbol
The Chronicle, Centralia, Wash.

Face it. The United Nations Commission on Human Rights is an unmitigated farce and the United States would do well to drop its membership. ...

A case in point is a recent report by a U.N. panel sponsored by Secretary-General Kofi Annan that rejected the proposal of any standard for whether or not the commission on the mission. One effect of that is that Sudan will not lose its seat on the 53-member body even though Sudan is accused by the United States of committing genocide in its western Darfur province. ...

There's more: The commission is expected next year to seek to prohibit the introduction of resolutions aimed at specific countries in human rights violations. The commission could do little more than approve resolutions condemning religious persecution or suppression of labor without identifying perpetrators. ...

We don't blame [U.S. Ambassador to the U.N.] John Danforth for stepping down from his post after just four months.

Death row made for Peterson
San Francisco Chronicle

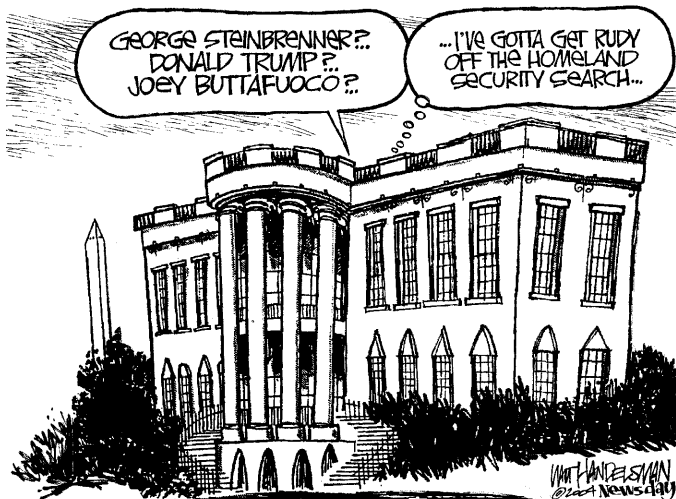
For once, the system worked.

If we are going to have a death penalty in California — and the need for a serious review is compelling — it was tailor-made for Scott Peterson. His crime was reprehensible, his guilt was overwhelming, his legal representation was first-class, his trial was unusually thorough and fair. ...

He earned his place on death row.

Just remember, however, this case is atypical. The overwhelming majority of Peterson's 650 death row contemporaries in California have never had an attorney. He got Gargano at their side and a legion of legal experts scrutinizing every detail of a six-month trial. ...

The debate over the death penalty should not be about Peterson. ... It should be about the potential margin of error in many other convictions. It should be about the evidence that suggests capital punishment is not a deterrent, it surely was not for Peterson. It should be about the morality of the state taking a life.

Not set with how Bush vets
The Morning Call, Allentown, Pa.

One Democratic insider described President Bush's nominee to head the Homeland Security Department, Bernard Kerik, as "a colorful guy." On [Dec. 10], the former New York City police commissioner abruptly withdrew from being considered to replace Tom Ridge as head of the huge department. ...

Officially, the reason Mr. Kerik gave was that he discovered [this month] that he had a "nanny problem." It turns out that a Mexican woman he had hired to care for his two young children was an illegal alien. ...

However, many insiders think Mr. Kerik's "nanny" problem might have been a convenient excuse to avoid thorough scrutiny of his colorful and controversial past. That well-documented record raises questions about how well the Bush administration's vetting process works. The president introduced Mr. Kerik as his nominee even before all the paperwork was done or an FBI background check was completed. ...

If the White House doesn't do a more thorough job, it means Senate confirmation hearings must be more rigorous.

Inequity in U.S. arsenal
Durango (Colo.) Herald

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld was visiting an Army base in Kuwait when Army Spc. Thomas Wilson asked him why his unit was short of needed equipment. ...

The secretary of defense responded with what amounted to a verbal shrug. "You go to war with the Army you have," Rumsfeld said, "not the Army you might want or wish to have." ...

But, many armies are organized and equipped for the wars they end up fighting. That is what is so glaringly wrong with Rumsfeld's response to Wilson. ...

The U.S. Army is its own best example. The Army that existed at the start of World War II was equipped largely with a mixture of antiques and wishful thinking. Maneuvers were carried out with trucks filling in for armor with the word "tank" painted on their sides. ...

But in less than time that U.S. troops have been in Iraq, the United States changed into the best-equipped military in the world. ...

In 2004, however, Rumsfeld is essentially saying the United States cannot put armor on cars and trucks. ...

After the episode, Sen. Christopher Dodd, D-Conn., wrote to Rumsfeld, calling his response to Wilson "unacceptable." That kind of congressional involvement is exactly what is needed. There should, and perhaps now will, be more of it.

Humble pie and food supply
Chicago Tribune

Departing Health and Human Services Secretary Tommy Thompson set off alarms [this month], saying he worries "every single night" about the possibility of a bioterrorist attack on the nation's food supply. ...

That sounded to many people like an invitation, and the Bush administration moved pretty quickly to dampen any anxiety. ...

After all, it's much more likely that Americans will get food poisoning by not properly cleaning a cutting board used to chop raw chicken. But it's worth knowing what risks there are that someone could tamper with the food chain, and what's being done about it. ...

Critics say new Food and Drug Administration rules are insufficient. The Center for Science in the Public Interest is pressing for the government to consolidate food oversight within a single group. ...

Thompson's blunt comments underscore that, given the vast size of the food distribution system, it may be impossible to prevent a bioterrorism attack of some form. But the new FDA requirements should at least help protect the public against threats to food safety. A quick response through the improved tracking of food could save lives.

No honor in omitting specifics
The Columbus (Ohio) Dispatch

Jessica Lynch, an unassuming young Army private from West Virginia, and Pat Tillman, the defensive back who gave up his \$3.6 million contract with the Arizona Cardinals to become an Army Ranger, made sacrifices serving their nation that needed no embellishment. ...

But by committing sins of omission and addition, the Pentagon foisted off storybook versions of Army Pfc. Lynch's capture and

rescue in Iraq and of Cpl. Tillman's ultimate sacrifice in the mountains of Afghanistan. ...

The misrepresentation of Tillman's death, however, is more egregious. ...

Tillman ... was reported killed by enemy fire on April 22. Shortly after, military officials said Tillman likely was hit by friendly fire. ... But the full story is only now coming to light, and it is one of botched communications, a highly questionable order to split up Tillman's platoon during patrol and too-quick-on-the-trigger reactions by young Rangers. ...

It's insulting to all Americans.

This nation has lost sons and daughters in many wars, and Americans have shown resilience in accepting the bitter truth of combat. But for the Pentagon to stonewall and obfuscate about such sacrifices is dishonorable.

Inaugural events all-business
The (Baltimore) Sun

Republicans see no reason in this time of war to spend down efforts to exceed the \$40 million spent for President Bush's 2001 inauguration. On the contrary, they make no apologies for everything they did to make it so. ...

George W. Bush certainly has something to celebrate. But does he need a gold-plated inaugural when families of reservists and National Guardsmen serving in Iraq are struggling every day? ...

Mr. Bush could have set a different tone this year by urging corporate and wealthy patrons to adopt a company of 130 soldiers or donate \$250,000 to a relief fund for military families. ...

To kick off his second term in 1985, President Reagan opted for a low-key inaugural, focusing more on free festivities for youths than high-end, black-tie affairs. Even President Clinton (who made the Lincoln bed room available to some big fund-raisers) cut back on special-interest contributions to his second inaugural, albeit after serious questions had been raised about some donors in his first campaign. ...

Robert K. Gray, a co-chair of President Reagan's first inaugural, gave a candid assessment of their relevance when he said, "Inaugurals are big business," and the big money derives from selling television rights to the associated events. He made those comments in 1985, and sadly, the business has only gotten bigger.

Killed by pit bull

CO KIOWA — The owner of three pit bulls that fatally mauled a woman last year was sentenced to six years in prison.

Jacqueline McCuen had faced three to six years in prison after pleading guilty in September to owning a dangerous dog causing death.

McCuen, of Elbert County, was charged after the death of Jennifer Brooke, 40. Brooke had been walking outside to feed her horses when she was attacked by three dogs, which also attacked two men before they were shot and killed.

Seven months before Brooke's death, McCuen's dogs attacked a jogger, prosecutors said.

McCuen's boyfriend was also charged and was scheduled for trial next month.

Death for attacking girl

OH CALDWELL — A man cried and apologized as a judge sentenced him to die for raping his girlfriend's 7-year-old daughter, beating her and drowning her in an abandoned well.

Fred Mundt Jr., 30, stopped short of admitting that he killed Brittany Hendrickson and said he will appeal. Mundt was convicted in December, and the judge followed the jury's recommendation that he be sentenced to death.

Brittany's mother, Misty Hendrickson, and her three children lived with Mundt in Lebanon.

She told authorities she left the children with Mundt while she played bingo. He first claimed the girl wandered away while he was asleep.

A psychologist testified in the trial's sentencing phase that Mundt told her he raped Brittany and considered taking her to a hospital. Instead he stuffed her in the well about a mile away and threw rocks at her until she stopped screaming.

Bees cause road closure

NV LAS VEGAS — A truck carrying 12 million honeybees hit a wall on a highway ramp, dumping its load across the pavement shortly before the evening rush hour.

The truck was carrying 480 bee colonies, each with 25,000 insects, to California to pollinate the state's almond crop when it struck the wall.

The collision spilled the bees and gallons of honey onto the highway and forced troopers to close the southbound ramp between Interstate 15 and U.S. 95 for more than four hours.

State police believe the driver lost control on the curving ramp.

Authorities summoned beekeepers to help but decided capturing the bees alive would take too much time and money. Firefighters doused the insects with water to kill them.

Bag of chips dispute

VA FREDERICKSBURG — A University of Mary Washington student has been arrested after a man was hit with a baseball bat during a dispute over a bag of chips.

Joseph Y. Fischer, a freshman, was charged with aggravated malicious wounding and assault and battery following the attack.



AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Fredericksburg police spokesman Jim Shellhorse said the incident occurred at an off-campus party at a home where Fischer lives following an argument over a bag of Doritos.

The victim was taken to Mary Washington Hospital. The extent of his injury was not available.

Aggravated malicious wounding carries a penalty of 20 years to life in prison.

Man convicted of theft

HI HONOLULU — An attorney who cheated the state out of more than \$12 million was sentenced to 10 years in prison.

Jerrold Chun, 56, had pleaded no contest to charges filed in connection with a scheme involving insurance claims stemming from Hurricane Iniki.

Chun's attorneys said in August that he had paid back the money he pocketed.

He was convicted of three counts of first-degree theft, one count of unlawful ownership or operation of a business and ten counts of money laundering.

College offers new degree

NM ALBUQUERQUE — The University of New Mexico says it will offer a bachelor's degree in Native American studies. Greg Cajete, director of the



Working hard

Brent Blaylock, 6, has a little trouble emptying his shovel while moving snow, in Solon Springs, Wis. Blaylock got a jacket full of snow for his good deed.

school's Native American studies program, predicted 100 students will enroll either as majors or minors by 2006. UNM, which has about 3,000 American Indian students, created a minor in Native American studies in 1999.

Mother arrested

FL ORLANDO — A woman was arrested on child abuse charges after her 3-year-old daughter was found dead in a filthy motel room where they lived with the woman's husband and five other children, authorities said.

The two adults were already serving four years probation because he used a belt to beat at least two children, including the girl who died, officials said.

Deputies found dirty diapers and trash littering the room at the extended-stay motel, and baby bottles containing moldy milk and what could have been maggots, said Orange County sheriff's spokeswoman Barbara Miller.

Kenya Hill, 27, called police and an emergency operator tried to give CPR instructions for little Kai Gaudin, but Hill told the operator it was too late, Miller said.

Kai, whose body was found on a bed, may have been dead for a day or two, authorities said. The Orange-Osceola medical examiner was performing an autopsy.

DEA denies pot request

MA AMHERST — The Drug Enforcement Administration has denied a request by a University of Massachusetts professor who wanted to grow marijuana for research.

The request by horticulturist Lyle Craker, who specializes in medicinal plants, was supported by Sens. John Kerry and Edward Kennedy.

The only lab in the country allowed to grow marijuana for research is at the University of Mississippi and Craker argued the Mississippi marijuana isn't strong enough or easily available.

Craker's hope is to grow a potent strain of marijuana and make it available to scientists.

Increased threat of fire

SD RAPID CITY — Fire remains a threat in the Black Hills National Forest and adjoining prairies, Joe Lowe, the state wildland fire coordinator, said above-normal temperatures, lack of snow and low humidity increase the risk of fire. He said conditions are similar to late November 2003 when a fire burned 1,000 acres and threatened homes just north of Rapid City.

CD/DVD piracy raid

CA LOS ANGELES — Authorities raided five music and movie disc production plants, confiscating truckloads of counterfeit CDs and DVDs and the equipment to make them, all worth tens of millions of dollars, authorities said.

The search warrants were served simultaneously at several companies in Los Angeles and Orange counties, authorities said. The names of the companies were withheld pending ongoing investigations.

The raid followed a six-month investigation.



Fiery blaze Firefighters could only watch as St. Mary's of Perpetual Health of Rosemont Catholic Church burned. The church is located in rural Warren County between Milo and Lacona in Iowa, and was a total loss.



Taking a break A mockingbird, the most widely-known songbird in America and state bird of Texas, stands perched on a Christmas display set up by the Bereaved Parents Support Group at Bywaters Park in Paris, Texas.



Protesting pooch A pomeranian named Sugarbaby carries a sign for his owner, Darla Urbina, who is a Spanish teacher at Gateway Institute of Technology, during a rally for what St. Louis Public School teachers consider an unfair contract imposed on them by the district at Kiener Plaza in St. Louis.



Charitable singer Miranda Smith, 9, sings Christmas songs outside of Wal-Mart in Grand Forks, N.D., as shoppers pass by. Miranda wants to raise money to get a bulletproof vest for Lesko, a dog at the Grafton (N.D.) Police Department.



A great surprise Nicole Kamp, a special programs teacher at Dillard Drive Elementary School in Raleigh, N.C., reacts to news that she has won a grant from the Wake Education Partnership.



Waiting in anticipation Sierra May, right, and other students wait to visit Santa at the Mesa Mall in Grand Junction, Colo. This was May's first time to see Santa.

Smuggler gets 30 years

FL MIAMI — A man who admitted smuggling more than 24 tons of cocaine into the United States from 1984 to 2000 was sentenced to 30 years in federal prison.

Alex Decubus, a Cuban-born naturalized American citizen, admitted helping run a small fleet of ships and boats, including a 236-foot Danish freighter, to carry cocaine into south Florida. He also allegedly built two submarines, one that was seized in Colombia and another that sank in a test off Colombia in 2002.

In guilty pleas entered in five indictments, Decubus also admitted laundering \$6.3 million in drug profits. He could have been sentenced to life in prison.

After working for the Julio Nasser David smuggling ring, which was dismantled in 1994 after \$189 million was seized in Swiss banks, Decubus worked with Colombia's North Coast cartel until his arrest last year.

Emergency hoaxes

VT STOWE — A former volunteer firefighter is facing charges that he made a series of false 911 calls so he could watch fire engines race toward fabricated emergencies.

Donald Griggs, 19, has pleaded not guilty to charges of false public alarms and false reports to law-enforcement officials. He was released on conditions following his arraignment last week in Vermont District Court in Barre, said Evelyn Bailey, executive director of the Vermont Enhanced 911 Board.

Court documents say Griggs used a cell phone he found in a Morrisville parking lot to call the emergency phone number about 15 times between Nov. 21 and Dec. 8. The phone was not associated with a wireless-service provider, so the only number it could call was 911, Bailey said.

Caskets hid marijuana

OK SALLISAW — Talk about your killer weed.

Oklahoma Highway Patrol troopers found 610 pounds of marijuana hidden in caskets being hauled in a truck stopped near this eastern Oklahoma town.

The driver, Timothy G. Hynd, 26, and his passenger, Robert Dean Harper, told a trooper they were working for a Tucson, Ariz., casket company and their destination was Atlanta. They were pulled over for going 6 mph over the speed limit.

The marijuana was found after troopers given permission to search the truck.

Hynd and Harper were charged with possession of marijuana with intent to distribute and were freed on bond. Both men said they had no idea there was marijuana in their cargo.

Not the smartest bet

WA ALGER — If you're going to settle that fiery football bar bet, at least be careful about who's around.

Three men who had been watching the Monday Night Football game earlier this month between Seattle and Dallas at the Alger Tavern in this Skagit County town stepped outside to settle up.

One of them had promised to burn his Seahawks' memorabilia if Seattle lost, which is exactly what

happened.

True to his word, the man walked outside, stripped off his jersey and hat, and lit them after on the tavern's walkway, the Skagit Valley Herald reported.

But a State Patrol sergeant drove by just at that moment and cited the trio — ages 22, 25 and 32 — for reckless burning. If convicted, they could face maximum penalties of a \$1,000 fine and 90 days in jail.

Owner didn't violate law

MT BILLINGS — The owner of a mobile home park near here didn't violate state campaign laws when he promised his tenants their rents would go down if voters approved a \$13 million sewer bond, a state election official ruled. Linda Vaughney said there wasn't sufficient evidence to conclude that Ivan Andrick was offering an illegal direct financial incentive for renters to vote for the measure in February.

Governor stays close

MO JEFFERSON CITY — Gov. Bob Holden won't move far when he leaves the Governor's Mansion next month. Holden said he's rented a house in Jefferson City and plans to remain in the capital at least until his sons finish the current school year. Holden's four-year term as governor ends at noon Jan. 10. He's had discussions with several prospective employers.

Botulism poisoning

FL OAKLAND PARK — Four people paralyzed by botulism were injected with large doses of a raw, unapproved botulinum toxin that someone at their anti-wrinkle treatment clinic bought from a California laboratory, federal documents show.

The suspended doctor who administered the shots, Bach McComb, used the material as if it were lower-strength Botox, a derivative of botulinum toxin that is a federally approved medication for wrinkle control and other uses, federal agents said in court papers.

McComb and his girlfriend are among the four people who remain hospitalized after getting the shots.

Botulism poisoning is fatal in about 10 percent of cases. It usually paralyzes victims from the head down for several months until affected nerve endings regrow.

Breast-feeding case

ME AUBURN — The Maine Human Rights Commission has cleared the manager of a Denny's Restaurant of allegations that he discriminated against a nursing mother by making inappropriate comments about her breasts.

In a 3-2 vote, the panel found no reasonable grounds to believe that discrimination had occurred. The vote went against the recommendation of the commission's investigator.

"I knew the truth would come out sooner or later," Marcel Deschaines said from the restaurant in Auburn, where he has worked for 15 years.

Stephanie York of Oakland filed the complaint alleging that Deschaines made several comments while she was breast-feeding her baby at Denny's on Nov. 21, 2003.

Stories and photos from wire services

AFRTS Television Schedule

Updated sports listings are available on the first Scoreboard page in the sports section or AFN's Web site at <http://myafn.dodmedia.osd.mil>

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2004

(AFN-FAMILY)	(AFN-MOVIE)	(AFN-EUROPE)	(AFN-KOREA)	(AFN-NEWS)	(AFN-SPORTS)	(SPECTRUM)	(AFN-PACIFIC)
9:00 House of Ancestries	(8:45) Movie *** "Smoky and the Bandit" (1977) Bob Reynolds, Jackie Gleason.	Movie *** "Til Be Home for Christmas" (1998) Jonathan Taylor Thomas, Jessica Biel.	Andromeda	Headline News America's Black Forum	SportsCenter PGA Tour Year End Special Highlights of the PGA season.	Latin Lifestyle Urban Style	Andromeda
10:30 Ed, Edd n Eddy			Headline News	The Chris Matthews Show		Fantasy Camp	Headline News
11:00 Fillmore (E)	Coming Attractions	SpongeBob SquarePants	ESPNWeek	World/Marine Corps News	Golf Weekly's Three-Tour Challenge - First Day From Reflection Bay Golf Club in Henderson, Nev. (Taped)	Rocker on the Road Radical Skateboard At American Festivals	ESPNWeek
11:00 Out There	Movie *** "Titanic" (1997) James Cameron, DiCaprio, Kate Winslet, Billy Zane.	Headline News	Movie *** "How the Grinch Stole Christmas" (2000) Jim Carrey. The evil Grinch plots to ruin Christmas in Whoville.	Big Story Magazine News			Smashville "Heratier"
12:30 News Now Special Edition	Planet's Funniest Animals	Headline News				The Suzie Oman Show	Movie *** "E! (2003, Comedy) Will Ferrell, James Caan. A rare (leaves Sarah's) workshop to search for his family.
13:00 Happy Days	Movie *** "Miracle on 34th Street" (1994) Richard Attenborough, Elizabeth Perkins.	College Basketball Oklahoma State at UNLV (Live)	Headline News	Fox and Friends	SportsCenter	Celebrity Pickup Showdown	Headline News
14:30 Movie *** "Home Alone" (1990, Comedy) Macaulay Culkin, Joe Pesci, Daniel Stern.	The Creech Movie! (1996) Demi Moore, David Strathairn. An angel becomes drawn to a pastor's dulcet-toned wife.	SportsCenter	Scrubs "I'll Have My Head!"	CBS News Sunday Morning	NFL Basketball: Texans to Be Announced (Taped)	Battle Stations "AT0" tank drive	Scrubs "My Heavy Medals"
15:30 Aaahh! Real Monsters	Rockit Power	WWE Smackdown!	Meet the Press		Sports Reporters	Jag "Iron Collin"	America's Black Forum
16:30 Rockit Power	Yue Hollywood Story	Stargate SG-1	Access Hollywood	Face the Nation	NFL Good Eats	The Best Of	Access Hollywood
17:30 SpongeBob SquarePants	Kratt Bros. Be the Creature	Fox NFL Sunday (Live)	ESPNWeek	Headline News	Good Eats	My Wife and Kids	ESPNWeek
18:30 Kratt Bros. Be the Creature	America's Funniest Home Videos	NFL Football Regional Coverage - Dallas at Philadelphia, Minnesota at Detroit or Seattle at N.Y. Jets. (Live)	NFL Football Regional Coverage - Buffalo at Cincinnati, Denver at Kansas City, Houston at Chicago or San Diego at Cleveland. (Live)	Late Edition Primetime	King of the Hill	Hops & Faith "Mammoth"	NFL Football Regional Coverage - Buffalo at Cincinnati, Denver at Kansas City, Houston at Chicago or San Diego at Cleveland. (Live)
19:30 America's Funniest Home Videos	Movie *** "Humford" (1999) Loren Dean, Hope Davis. Patients look to a psychologist with lake credentials.	NFL Football Regional Coverage - Dallas at Philadelphia, Minnesota at Detroit or Seattle at N.Y. Jets. (Live)	NFL Football Regional Coverage - Buffalo at Cincinnati, Denver at Kansas City, Houston at Chicago or San Diego at Cleveland. (Live)	FOX News	NFL Football Regional Coverage - Dallas at Philadelphia, Minnesota at Detroit or Seattle at N.Y. Jets. (Live)	The King of Queens	Late Comic Standing
20:30 Gilmore Girls "The Hugging"	(35) Movie *** "Behind Enemy Lines" (2001, Action)	NFL Football Regional Coverage - New Orleans Saints at Tampa Bay Buccaneers or St. Louis Rams at Arizona Cardinals.	NFL Football Regional Coverage - Jacksonville Jaguars at Green Bay Packers or Tennessee Titans at Oakland Raiders.	FOX News	NFL Football Regional Coverage - New Orleans Saints at Tampa Bay Buccaneers or St. Louis Rams at Arizona Cardinals.	Friends	Headline News
21:30 American Dreams "To Tell the Truth"	Movie *** "The Deserter" (1984) Grand Canyon			PHS with Chris Wallace		Seinfeld "The Stink"	Headline News
22:30 The Cosby Show						Mad TV	Headline News
23:30 House Improvement							Headline News
24:30 Touched by an Angel "He Came Upon a Midnight Clear"							Headline News
MONDAY, DECEMBER 24, 2004							
00:00 SpongeBob SquarePants	(11:00) Movie *** "Conan the Destroyer" (1984, Fantasy)	NFL Football: Saints at Buccaneers or Rams at Raiders	NFL Football: Jaguars at Packers or Titans at Raiders	Yim Russett	NFL Football: Saints at Buccaneers or Rams at Raiders	Austin City Limits "Shirley Young/Tina Turner"	NFL Football: Jaguars at Packers or Titans at Raiders
00:30 Kratt Bros. Be the Creature	(12:50) Movie *** "Archangel" (1990) Jeff Bridges. A group of lethal assassins descends on a community.	NFL Football: Texans to Be Announced (Taped)	Little Bear "We're Lost"	People in the News	SportsCenter (Live)	Hops & Faith "Mammoth"	Little Bear "We're Lost"
1:00 America's Funniest Home Videos			Dr. Phil	This Week	NFL Primetime (Live)	The King of Queens	Dr. Phil
2:30 Gilmore Girls "The Hugging"	Movie *** "Humford" (1999) Loren Dean, Hope Davis. Patients look to a psychologist with lake credentials.	ESPNWeek	Oprah Winfrey	Outline International	NFL Football Baltimore Ravens at Indianapolis Colts. From the RCA Dome in Indianapolis. (Live)	Friends	Headline News
3:30 American Dreams "To Tell the Truth"	(4:05) Movie *** "Behind Enemy Lines" (2001, Action)	Headline News	Judge Judy	CNN Sunday Night	SportsCenter (Live)	Breathingspace Yoga	Judge Judy
4:00 Sesame Street (E)	Black's Classic "Thematic Play"	Headline News	Judge Judy	CNN Presents		Caribbean Workout	Access Hollywood
5:30 Barney & Friends (E)	Christina Applegate Reveals	Meet the Press	Headline News	Access Hollywood		Body Shaping	(13) General Hospital
6:30 Barney & Friends (E)	Black's Classic "Thematic Play"	Headline News	Little Bear	(25) Guiding Light		The View	Aladdin "The Vapor Chase"
7:30 Dragon Tales (E)	Christmas Applegate Reveals	Play With Me Sesame	Little Bear	(25) Guiding Light		Body Shaping	ChalkZone (E)
8:30 Bob the Builder	Holiday Movie Magic	Headline News	Little Bear	(25) Guiding Light		The View	ChalkZone (E)
9:30 The Wiggles	Entertainment Tonight	Headline News	Little Bear	(25) Guiding Light		The View	ChalkZone (E)
10:30 Dora the Explorer	Entertainment Tonight	Headline News	Little Bear	(25) Guiding Light		The View	ChalkZone (E)
11:30 The Wild Thornberrys	Entertainment Tonight	Headline News	Little Bear	(25) Guiding Light		The View	ChalkZone (E)
12:30 ChalkZone (E)	Entertainment Tonight	Headline News	Little Bear	(25) Guiding Light		The View	ChalkZone (E)
13:30 ChalkZone (E)	Entertainment Tonight	Headline News	Little Bear	(25) Guiding Light		The View	ChalkZone (E)
14:30 ChalkZone (E)	Entertainment Tonight	Headline News	Little Bear	(25) Guiding Light		The View	ChalkZone (E)
15:30 ChalkZone (E)	Entertainment Tonight	Headline News	Little Bear	(25) Guiding Light		The View	ChalkZone (E)
16:30 ChalkZone (E)	Entertainment Tonight	Headline News	Little Bear	(25) Guiding Light		The View	ChalkZone (E)
17:30 ChalkZone (E)	Entertainment Tonight	Headline News	Little Bear	(25) Guiding Light		The View	ChalkZone (E)
18:30 ChalkZone (E)	Entertainment Tonight	Headline News	Little Bear	(25) Guiding Light		The View	ChalkZone (E)
19:30 ChalkZone (E)	Entertainment Tonight	Headline News	Little Bear	(25) Guiding Light		The View	ChalkZone (E)
20:30 ChalkZone (E)	Entertainment Tonight	Headline News	Little Bear	(25) Guiding Light		The View	ChalkZone (E)
21:30 ChalkZone (E)	Entertainment Tonight	Headline News	Little Bear	(25) Guiding Light		The View	ChalkZone (E)
22:30 ChalkZone (E)	Entertainment Tonight	Headline News	Little Bear	(25) Guiding Light		The View	ChalkZone (E)
23:30 ChalkZone (E)	Entertainment Tonight	Headline News	Little Bear	(25) Guiding Light		The View	ChalkZone (E)
24:30 ChalkZone (E)	Entertainment Tonight	Headline News	Little Bear	(25) Guiding Light		The View	ChalkZone (E)

MONDAY, DECEMBER 20, 200

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SPECIAL TO STARS AND STRIPES

Walter Scott's **Personality** PARADE®

Want the facts? Opinions? Truth? Write Walter Scott, Box 5001, Grand Central Station, New York, N.Y. 10163-5001. Full name will be used unless otherwise requested. Volume of mail makes personal replies impossible.

Q When Kirsten Dunst and Jake Gyllenhaal broke up, who got their dog? — Paula Knowles, Barstow, Calif.

A For starters, we're not convinced they broke up. So who has canine custody is a moot point. Jake, who turns 24 today, and Kirsten, 22, have been spotted canoodling since their reported split last summer. But it seems that Atticus — the lop-eared German shepherd mix they adopted — spends more time with best bud Jake.

Q I saw Cody Gifford, son of Kathie Lee and Frank Gifford, on "Teen Kids News." Are any of the other kids on that syndicated program from showbiz families? — Gloria Karolenko, Woodstock, Md.

A Yes. Cody's colleagues include Meredith Vieira's son, Ben Cohen, 16; Paula Zahn's daughter, Haley Cohen, 15; and Jenna Ruggiero, 15, daughter of Rosanna Scott, news anchor for the Fox TV station in New York. "Teen Kids News" is taped on Friday afternoons, as Cody, 14, and his pals insist on having weekends off.

Q In your view, what is the single biggest obstacle to capturing Osama bin Laden, who is said to be hiding out on the border between Afghanistan and Pakistan? — James Wolf, Tallahassee, Fla.

A The No. 1 impediment is the political situation inside Pakistan. Though Pakistan's President Pervez Musharraf has vowed to capture Osama, members of his military and intelligence services have clandestine ties to al-Qaida. Musharraf is trying to force these officers into early retirement. Our hopes of catching Osama may rest on the success of his housecleaning.

Q Lady Bird Johnson has been out of the spotlight since her stroke in 2002. How is her health? — Carolyn H., Yorba Linda, Calif.

A As good as can be expected for a 76-year-old woman who turns 92 this week. Mrs. Johnson's stroke makes it difficult to understand her speech, yet she attends events at the LBJ Library in Austin and spends time at her ranch in Stonewall, Texas.

Q Oprah Winfrey has the peculiar thin look associated with lap-band or gastric-bypass surgery. Has she recently had such a procedure? — A. Stephens, Richardson, Texas

A No. And if she had, she would be the first to tell the world about it. Oprah, 50, has been completely open with her audience about her ceaseless struggle to lose weight through diet and exercise.

Oprah's recently enjoyed success with her attempts at controlling her weight.



Rumors of the breakup of actors Jake Gyllenhaal and Kirsten Dunst appear to be greatly exaggerated.

Q Whatever became of child star Bobby Driscoll, who played Johnny in 1946's "Song of the South"? — B.H., Atlanta

A Bobby — just 13 when he got a special Oscar in 1950 for powerful performances in the thriller "The Window" and the family drama "So Dear to My Heart" — quit acting in 1957 to take a "straight job." Sadly, his life quickly slid downhill with multiple arrests for drug possession, assault and forgery, a six-month prison sentence and a trip to a psychiatric hospital. In March 1968, Driscoll died penniless and alone in an abandoned New York tenement. He's buried in Potter's Field on nearby Hart Island.

Q When will I see more of country goddess Shania Twain? — Tim Gallagher, Albany, N.Y.

A Just in videos on ACMT's "100 Greatest Hits" special this Wednesday. After exhausting tours for her 2002 CD "Up!" and her new "Greatest Hits" album, Shania, 39, looks forward to returning to the Swiss chalet she shares with her reclusive producer-husband, "Mutt" Lange, and 3-year-old son, Eja (pronounced Asia). She plans to focus on raising Eja, writing songs and riding her horses.



Country music singer Shania Twain plans to be out of the limelight for a while.



Johnny Depp will play Willy Wonka in Tim Burton's remake of "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory."

Q I heard that Robin Williams, Nicolas Cage and Steve Martin all want to play Willy Wonka when "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory" is remade. Which one will get the role? — Tad Levine, New York

A None of the above. Director Tim Burton chose Johnny Depp, 31, to star as Willy. Helena Bonham Carter, 38 — Burton's girlfriend and the mother of his son Billy, 1 — plays Charlie's mom.

Q You said Stephen Merritt wrote the song "Book of Love" for the movie "Shall We Dance?" But didn't that song appear on an earlier CD?

A Yes. A handful of readers reminded us that Merritt, 38, of the band The Magnetic Fields, included "Book of Love" on a 1999 CD, "69 Love Songs." "The album is a cynical manifesto about love songs, not a collection of songs about love," he tells us. His band's new CD, titled "i," features 14 tracks starting with that letter.

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YOUR MONEY

Meaning down degree benefits

Susie Besaw, from the book "The Savvy Sailor's Spouse," is new to the military lifestyle but is eager to learn more about how to manage her family and her new lifestyle through the monthly Family Readiness Group meetings of her husband Jake's new command.

Bob Reynard, the local representative from the Navy College Office, was briefing the Family Readiness Group on the benefits of increasing your education. Navy College is basically a network of professional education services specialists in 62 major shore installations around the world.

"Isn't a college degree expensive?" I asked.

"Yes," Bob replied. "But it's less expensive than not earning your degree. That's why we put opportunity cost as the first item on our action plan."

"No one made a sound. Bob wrote a chart on the board.

There were several aha's followed by more chatter. When he finished, he continued, "I see the same reaction whenever I show this chart. This chart says that, on average, a four-year college graduate makes about 60 percent more each year than a high school graduate. Of course, your work history also can affect these numbers. These are just averages."

"Why is the annual difference in pay between different levels of education important?"

"No one volunteered an answer."

"Does anybody know what the different college degrees are or what they cost?" Bob asked.

The silence continued.

Bob went on, "Don't feel bad. Many potential students don't have a clue what the different degrees mean, how long it takes to finish them, or even what they cost. In general, an associate's degree requires 60 credit hours and a bachelor's degree requires twice as much, or 120 credit hours. The typical class is worth three credit hours."

"A full course load is five classes a semester or 15 credits per semester. Some schools, such as the University of Maryland, offer shortened, more intensive semesters at their overseas military campuses. This can be a big help to people who deploy often because it makes it possible to take classes even though their schedule has so many restrictions. That means you can earn 30 credits a year going full time, allowing you to finish an associate's degree in two years and a bachelor's degree in four."

"Now, assuming a public college average cost of \$70 per credit hour for an associate's degree and \$140 for a bachelor's degree, the average total cost for tuition is \$4,200 for an associate's degree and \$16,800 for bachelor's

Education earnings

National median earnings for each level of education for the year 2000.

Level of education	Men	Women
No HS	20,789	15,978
Some HS	25,096	17,919
HS Grad	34,303	24,970
Some College	40,337	28,697
Associate	41,952	31,071
Bachelor's	56,334	40,415
Master's	68,322	50,139
Professional	99,411	58,957
Doctorate	80,250	57,081

degree. Of course, this is a ballpark figure. Costs vary greatly depending on the school.

"If you go full time and live on campus, add at least another \$5,000 a year to cover books, a place to live, food and transportation costs — making your total bill \$20,200 for a two-year associate's degree and \$48,800 for a four-year bachelor's degree. For a more detailed list of costs associated with attending school go to http://military.wiredscholar.com/paying_est_ac/ac_index.jsp."

"That doesn't sound right," Peggy Lopez said. "You earn an average \$7,000 to \$16,000, according to your chart, after shelling out \$20,000 to \$50,000 for a degree!"

"Actually, it is worth it to earn your degree," Bob replied. "Did you know a million dollars will earn only 1 million dollars over the next 40 years working full time every year?"

"Only!" Peggy exclaimed.

"Yes. But someone with a high school diploma can expect to earn twice as much, or 2 million dollars, over the same time period," Bob said.

Bob continued, "Earn your bachelor's degree and you'll make three times what a high school dropout makes. Go crazy and earn a masters degree and you can plan to make over four times a high school dropout or over 4 million dollars over the same working lifetime. Of course, different degrees, family commitments and other items come into play."

"Now that we have all the facts, doesn't it sound like a good choice to go back to school?" Copies of the book "The Savvy Sailor's Spouse" and "The Savvy Naval Officer" can be purchased by writing to author Plan Inc., 500 N. Washington St., P.O. Box 10071, Rockville, MD 20859 or online at www.savvystripes.com. This article is written and the book is sold with the understanding that neither the author nor Stars and Stripes are professional financial advisers. If you need advice, please seek professional assistance. The author specifically disclaims any liability for financial or personal or otherwise — incurred as a consequence, directly or indirectly, of using or applying any of the information contained in this article or the book.

finance@stripes.osd.mil



Caleb Sima, chief technology officer for SPI Dynamics, poses in the company's Atlanta office Tuesday. Sima is one of a select group of young techies who hit it big without an academic pedigree.

Skipping college paid off for some teen techies, but not all

BY DAVE CARPENTER

The Associated Press

CHICAGO — Caleb Sima still marvels at how angry the people around him got when he fled high school for a computer job during the high-tech boom, thumbing his nose at the traditional career path.

Skipping college, they warned, would be a foolish route to nowhere. "One day, I'm going to see you taking out my trash," his principal told him.

Ha. Boasting a six-figure salary as chief technology officer of an online security company, Sima is one of a select group of young techies who hit it big without an academic pedigree after technology and Internet-related businesses exploded in the late 1990s.

Just how many succeeded and how many failed in their quest is impossible to know. But a trail of anecdotal evidence on the Internet testifies to a few notable winners like the 24-year-old Sima, whose goal is to retire by 30. Only then might he attend college — mainly to "have fun and relax a little bit."

"It infuriates me when I hear people say you have to have a college degree in order to make a certain salary," he said from At-

lanta-based SPI Dynamics, which he co-founded.

"That is not true." Matching his diploma-less feat clearly has become more difficult since the tech bubble burst in 2001, however, and fewer seem inclined to try.

Data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics suggests that the number of those skipping college for the tech world has been declining steadily for three or more years. There were 40,000 16- to 19-year-olds working in computer-related occupations in 2000; 18,000 in 2003.

"While a small number did strike it rich by rushing into the work force, I would estimate that about the same percentage struck it rich by buying lottery tickets," said Steven Rothberg, president and founder of Minneapolis-based CollegeRecruiter.com, a job site for students and recent graduates.

Bill Gates and Michael Dell became billionaires without having finished college. But they are now looked upon as flukes.

"It's so difficult to find an IT job now" without a degree, Rothberg said.

"Five years ago, if you weren't incarcerated and had a pulse, you had a pretty good chance."

The Information Technology

Association of America, an Arlington, Virginia-based trade group representing technology companies, estimates there are 10.5 million IT workers. But competition for the jobs is intense and qualifications have risen from the dot-coms' pioneer era just a few years ago, spokesman Bob Cohen said.

"Now employers really want to see people with a four-year degree, or at least a two-year degree and significant certification," he said. "Their expectations have gone up."

Sima was 16 when he dropped out of high school after his freshman year, bored with school and unable to fully pursue his love of computers. He earned a high school equivalency degree, got a job fixing PCs and gradually moved up to security administrator of an online bank before starting a company in 2000.

With all the experience he gained, there was never a regret about missing college. Even today, he often finds that job applicants with Ph.D.s in computer science don't have what it takes despite their lofty degrees.

"Book knowledge is helpful somewhat in the IT world, but not near as much as real-world knowledge," he said.

But Sima doesn't think teen techies should ditch school without good reason.

"I'm not saying that someone who is a high-school kid but doesn't know what they want to do should do it," he said. "I think you have to somewhat realize what your goal is and be able to set yourself up for success."

Money II.

Ralph Nelson

YOUR MONEY

Balancing credit needs with score

Q: I am 20 and new to the world of credit. I just received a secured credit card and would like to know the fastest way to build my credit with this plastic. I have been told that the only way to build a good credit score is to spend 70 percent to 80 percent of my limit, then pay off

Money Talk



Liz Pulliam Weston

that I won't need parents' help when I want to purchase a car and, later, a house. Can you help?

A: You're smart to want to build a good credit history. Having a good credit score — the three-digit number lenders use to help gauge your creditworthi-

There's no need to pay interest on a credit card to build your score because the credit-scoring formula doesn't distinguish between balances you pay off each month and balances you carry.

ness — will ensure that you get the credit you need in the future.

You'll also pay less for loans because those with good scores get better interest rates and terms than those with poor or mediocre scores. Landlords, insurers and employers also may use credit information to evaluate applicants.

But the advice you're given on how to build a good credit score is dead wrong.

Far from rewarding people who use 70 percent or more of their credit limits, the leading credit-scoring system penalizes those who max out their credit cards. If your goal is to improve your credit score, you typically don't want to use more than about 20 percent to 30 percent of your available limit.

That might be a pretty small amount because you secured cards give you a credit limit

that's equal to the deposit you make with the issuing bank, typically \$200 to \$1,000. But a little discipline now can pay off later. Make sure you keep track of your purchases, either in a check register you carry for that purpose or by checking your balance frequently online.

There's also no need to pay interest on a credit card to build your score. That's because the credit-scoring formula doesn't distinguish between balances you pay off each month and balances you carry.

What's factored into your score is the balance that your credit card company reports to the credit bureaus and that is normally the balance that appeared on your most recent statement. If you charged \$200 last month, for example, that's the amount that will be reported to the bureaus, even

if you paid off the full \$200 the day your credit card bill arrived. Because your score doesn't depend on whether you carry a balance or not, you might as well be smart and pay it off in full every month to avoid interest charges.

By the way, you'll want to make sure your secured card reports to the three major credit bureaus so that you're building a history with all three.

Also, you'll want the secured card to convert to an unsecured card after 12 to 18 months of on-time payments because unsecured cards are better for your score. If your card doesn't offer that conversion feature, look for one that does.

A few other ways to build a good score quickly include:

■ Check your credit reports. Make sure there are no errors, including accounts that aren't yours.

■ Pay your bills on time, all the time. Late payment can quickly trash your score.

■ Apply for credit sparingly. You don't want to put in a bunch of applications all at once, although you probably do want to have more than one card. Consider applying for a gas or department store card now and another credit card in a year or so so the cards represent both lightly and pay off the balances promptly.

■ Consider an installment loan. An auto loan or small personal loan that's repaid according to schedule can help boost your score.

■ If you continue to make good credit a priority and use the credit you have responsibly, you should be in fine shape for your future.

Liz Pulliam Weston is the author of "Your Credit Score: How to Fix, Improve and Protect the 3-Digit Number That Shapes Your Financial Future." Questions for Money Talk can be submitted via her Web site, <http://www.lizweston.com>, although she regrets that she cannot respond personally to queries.

Homebuyers: Loan options are available

Bankrate.com

When it comes to choosing the length of a mortgage, consumers have more choices than ever. The most popular loans are still the 15- and 30-year fixed mortgages, but few buyers realize that they also can shop fixed-rate loans that span 10, 20, 25 or 40 years.

About 35 percent of homebuyers are going for hybrid loans, which offer a few years of a fixed rate before switching over to an adjustable rate, says Doug Duncan, senior vice president and chief economist with the Mortgage Bankers Association. Here are some options:

■ 15-year fixed-rate mortgage: You'll get a lower rate than with a 30-year mortgage, but a stiffer monthly payment to go with it.

■ 30-year fixed-rate mortgage: The old reliable. It offers a higher interest rate than the 15-year mortgage, but sweetened with a lower payment.

■ 40-year fixed-rate mortgage: You have to shop to it to see if it makes any sense for you. Is the monthly debt that much lower to make it worth paying an extra 10 years of interest?

■ Nontraditional term fixed-rate mortgages: You get one of these, you might have to approach lenders individually to ask them what they would charge for a loan term you need.

■ Hybrid adjustable-rate mortgages: The most popular types of hybrids give the borrower a fixed rate for one, three, five, seven or 10 years, then convert to an adjustable-rate mortgage.

■ Five-year ARM: ARMs are particularly good for first-time homebuyers and people who are planning on being in their homes for a short period.

■ Make-your-own mortgage: Allows homeowners to easily adjust the length of their mortgage by making additional principal payments.

FRIDAY'S MARKET SUMMARY

EXCHANGE RATES

INDEXES				
52-week High	Low	Name	Last	% Chg
10,753.61	9,708.40	Dow Jones Industrial	10,647.97	+5.17
3,778.55	2,743.46	Dow Jones Transportation	3,735.07	+17.84
135.30	25.411	S&P 500	30.87	+0.51
7,161.96	5,171.85	NASDAQ Composite	7,088.15	+33.83
1,417.41	1,114.28	NYSE Amex	1,409.21	+1.51
1,171.27	1,750.82	Nasdaq Composite	1,171.27	+0.82
1,207.97	1,060.72	S&P 500	1,194.20	+0.91
556.25	549.29	S&P MidCap	551.66	+0.22
648.61	515.50	Russell 2000	604.18	+0.15
		DJ Wilshire 5000	—	+0.78

NYSE				
Most Active	(% or more)			
Name	Vol	(00)	Last	% Chg
Altria	26,571	12.73	26.57	+0.13
Novartis	24,603	11.65	44.50	+0.15
United Therapeutics	18,408	11.65	44.50	+0.15
Novartis	18,408	11.65	44.50	+0.15
Novartis	18,408	11.65	44.50	+0.15
Novartis	18,408	11.65	44.50	+0.15
Novartis	18,408	11.65	44.50	+0.15
Novartis	18,408	11.65	44.50	+0.15
Novartis	18,408	11.65	44.50	+0.15
Novartis	18,408	11.65	44.50	+0.15

AMEX				
Most Active	(% or more)			
Name	Vol	(00)	Last	% Chg
Altria	26,571	12.73	26.57	+0.13
Novartis	24,603	11.65	44.50	+0.15
United Therapeutics	18,408	11.65	44.50	+0.15
Novartis	18,408	11.65	44.50	+0.15
Novartis	18,408	11.65	44.50	+0.15
Novartis	18,408	11.65	44.50	+0.15
Novartis	18,408	11.65	44.50	+0.15
Novartis	18,408	11.65	44.50	+0.15
Novartis	18,408	11.65	44.50	+0.15
Novartis	18,408	11.65	44.50	+0.15

NASDAQ				
Most Active	(% or more)			
Name	Vol	(00)	Last	% Chg
Altria	26,571	12.73	26.57	+0.13
Novartis	24,603	11.65	44.50	+0.15
United Therapeutics	18,408	11.65	44.50	+0.15
Novartis	18,408	11.65	44.50	+0.15
Novartis	18,408	11.65	44.50	+0.15
Novartis	18,408	11.65	44.50	+0.15
Novartis	18,408	11.65	44.50	+0.15
Novartis	18,408	11.65	44.50	+0.15
Novartis	18,408	11.65	44.50	+0.15
Novartis	18,408	11.65	44.50	+0.15

Military rates				
Dollar costs (Dec. 20)				
British pound (Dec. 20)	1.59			
Japanese yen (Dec. 20)	102.60			
South Korean won (Dec. 20)	1,032			
Commercial rates				
Bahrain (Dinar)	6,378			
British pound	1,277			
Canada (Dollar)	1,288			
Denmark (Krone)	5,977			
Egypt (Pound)	2,251			
Hong Kong (Dollar)	\$1,329/70			
Hungary (Forint)	7,284			
Iceland (Krona)	185.08			
Ireland (Euro)	63.46			
Israel (Shekel)	4,396			
Japan (Yen)	104.31			
Kuwait (Dinar)	2,267			
Norway (Krone)	6,185			
Philippines (Peso)	1,648			
Saudi Arabia (Riyal)	1,747			
South Korea (Won)	100.20			
Switzerland (Franc)	95.62			
Thailand (Baht)	1,408.51			
Turkey (Lira)	1,408.51			
(Military exchange rates are those available to customers at military banking facilities in the country of issuance of the currency. Exchange rates are in dollars-to-pound, and the euro, which is dollars-to-euro.)				

Key Defense Stocks				
Name	Vol	DE	FE	% Chg
Altria	26,571	12.73	26.57	+0.13
Novartis	24,603	11.65	44.50	+0.15
United Therapeutics	18,408	11.65	44.50	+0.15
Novartis	18,408	11.65	44.50	+0.15
Novartis	18,408	11.65	44.50	+0.15
Novartis	18,408	11.65	44.50	+0.15
Novartis	18,408	11.65	44.50	+0.15
Novartis	18,408	11.65	44.50	+0.15
Novartis	18,408	11.65	44.50	+0.15
Novartis	18,408	11.65	44.50	+0.15
Novartis	18,408	11.65	44.50	+0.15

Key Mutual Funds				
Name	Vol	NAV	Chg	% Chg
Fidelity Asset Manager	37.75	1.37	+0.03	+2.21
Fidelity Asset Manager	37.75	1.37	+0.03	+2.21
Fidelity Asset Manager	37.75	1.37	+0.03	+2.21
Fidelity Asset Manager	37.75	1.37	+0.03	+2.21
Fidelity Asset Manager	37.75	1.37	+0.03	+2.21
Fidelity Asset Manager	37.75	1.37	+0.03	+2.21
Fidelity Asset Manager	37.75	1.37	+0.03	+2.21
Fidelity Asset Manager	37.75	1.37	+0.03	+2.21
Fidelity Asset Manager	37.75	1.37	+0.03	+2.21
Fidelity Asset Manager	37.75	1.37	+0.03	+2.21

PRECIOUS METALS				
New York Merc exchange				
Gold	541.60			
Silver	56.70			

INTEREST RATES				
Prime rate				
Discount rate	5.25			
3-month bill	2.20			
30-year mortgage	5.25			
Source: The Associated Press, Bank of America				

Currencies and Sensibility				
Money tip of the day				

Setting financial goals				
BY NANCY DUNNAN				

The federal government has just published a free package of publications that will help you organize your finances, plan for the future, protect your credit and set up a budget, manage your spending and avoid ID theft.				
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Discover why so many people are saying...				
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Sunday Horoscope

The energetic Aries moon is an enthusiastic cheerleader for projects big and small. Obstacles must be pummeled, but you've got the energy to do it. If you've waited this long to get your holiday cards out, you may as well wait one more day before mailing them—tomorrow, Mercury goes direct, so there will be fewer delivery mistakes.

TODAY'S BIRTHDAY

(December 19). Your dreams for the future are coming true this year—not without hard work, mind you. This month and next, the "work" is unlike any you've done before. Changing your belief system isn't easy, but it's effective and quick! More money flows through your world in January and February. Flirtation turns to full romance this spring.

ARIES (March 21-April 19)

Beware—one size does not fit all. When you're aiming to win a heart, a sale or a stamp of approval, you need a different approach for each person involved. Be ready to adjust at the slightest indicator that it's not working.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

Letter writing and e-mail are exceptionally helpful. There's an opportunity to associate with someone creative, interesting and possibly famous. You also might date someone you once considered out of your league.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21)

Understanding the opposite sex is your impossible preoccupation. You won't get any closer to the answer now, but it's fun to ask the questions. Physical activities bring a healthy release of the holiday stress. Get active.

CANCER (June 22-July 22)

There's no reason to analyze, excel and strive until you're miserable. Laughter and satisfaction are life-lengthening. Make arrangements to have more of both! It's lucky to hang out with a Gemini or Aquarius.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

Clever friends do not know it all, so don't let their influence you in the wrong direction. You're biding your time instead of making the next move in

a relationship—you don't want to appear eager or clingy. Risk being honest.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

Character is what no one can take away from you. That's why your work so diligently at building yours. Your awareness is featured. It's not something you have to say out loud but an internal process to repeat time and again.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23)

You're in the flow. Your concentration is impressive, and out of your efforts springs something magical. Praise for your brilliance is slow in coming, but don't you worry—you'll soon get enough to make you feel embarrassed.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21)

Sure, it's the season of giving, but what about you? Giving a present from you to you is actually a blessing to your friends and family as well. It makes you feel more generous in regards to them.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

Your sophistication can be intimidating. You should know that someone who looks up to you doesn't even know what you're talking about half of the time. A small kindness is a big deal to the one receiving it.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

Draw, write, and compose. Anything you do pleases your toughest critic: you. Low self-esteem can only scratched the surface with a new sweetie. Tonight gives you a glimpse of how connected the two of you really are.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

Push yourself to do the very thing you don't want to do. This is how you get the self-discipline to do even more! Your relaxation tonight is well earned! Let friends lead the way—you'll love what they come up with.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

There's pressure to come off looking cool to someone you're getting to know. Being seen with people who admire you will seem like the key. Really, though, all this person cares about is how you treat him or her.

CREATORS SYNDICATE

Scallywag may have Gaelic roots

Dear Editor: I recently heard the word "scallywag" in a movie. Where does this word come from?—B.J., Champaign, Ill.

Dear B.J.: No one is entirely sure where "scallywag" and its early spelling variant "scalwag" came from.

Our earliest piece of printed evidence for it is from a 19th-century dictionary of Americanisms, where "scalwag" is listed as a Eastern term for "a mean fellow."

A few years after the first sighting of "scalwag," it was used in The New York Tribune to describe scrawny, ill-nourished cattle.

It's possible this is the original

sense of the word, since this second piece of citational evidence for it wasn't glossed (that is, defined within the text), but without more evidence, we can't be sure.

We also can't sure of the word's pedigree. The best guess etymologists have come up with is that it may be related to the Scots Gaelic word "scalag," referring to a servant or farm-worker.

Unfortunately, there's no way to know which Gaelic word was transformed into "scalwag" and deposited on American soil, so its etymology remains unknown.

This column was prepared by the editors of Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 10th Edition. Readers may send questions to Merriam-Webster's Wordwatch, P.O. Box 261, 47 Federal St., Springfield, Mass. 01102.

Grandpa moves in, burdens family with his misbehavior

Dear Abby:

When we married in 1998, my husband, "Grant," and I agreed that we would never put our parents into a nursing home as long as we were physically able to care for them. After our honeymoon was built, my father-in-law, "Papa Jake," moved in with us. Papa Jake is now 73, wheelchair-bound from a stroke, and an alcoholic.

He gets into his motorized wheelchair every day and heads out to the local bar, which is a mile away. When he returns, he's completely intoxicated, and sometimes falls.

Papa Jake is also belligerent toward me, and I don't want our 2-year-old son living in this environment. I didn't bargain on this when I married Grant.

Grant refuses to tell Papa Jake that if he can't live by the rules he needs to leave. I have reached my limit. I love Grant, but I can't live like this anymore. When is enough enough?

Dear Fed Up: Papa Jake appears to be a danger to himself.

If you haven't already done so, inform his doctor about what's going on. It's extremely unfair of your husband to wimp out and allow his father to treat you so

disrespectfully—let alone drive his wheelchair drunk on the public roads.

The bargain you made with your spouse was that you would care for his father as long as you were physically able. Well, since you are not physically able to prevent Papa Jake's forays to the bar, since that's the time he comes for Jake to go, and do not back down.

Dear Abby:

Before a game, my friend asked if I ever had a flame-shooter. Then he went into the bathroom and got a can of hair spray and some matches. He told me to light

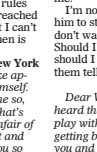
the match and hold it. While I was holding the match, he sprayed the hair spray on it, and then my hand caught fire. I wasn't burned, but it scared me.

I'm not sure what to do. I want him to still be my friend, but I don't want to get hurt.

Should I let him keep doing it, or should I tell someone and have them tell him to stop?

— Worried in Kansas

Dear Worried: Have you ever heard the saying that people who play with fire usually wind up getting burned? This applies to you and your friend. All you



Sexual letter may have been accidentally sent to pen pal

Dear Annie:

I am 64 years old and have been pen pals with "Miranda" for the last 10 years. We never take longer than two weeks to respond to each letter, but since I wrote her four months ago, she hasn't written back, and I fear I know why.

I was just about to seal the envelope and mail my regular letter to her, and in a moment of craziness, I grabbed another piece of paper and started to write a sexual fantasy letter. I don't know what got into me.

After several minutes, I stopped and said to myself, "OK, you get that out of your system. Now tear it up and toss it in the trash." This is where my recollection I have of that dreadful evening.

When months went by, I started to wonder about the last time I wrote to her, and in a panic, I considered that I accidentally may have sent the dirty letter along with my regular one. I'm certain Miranda must be repulsed and confused. If I write her again, she might call the police, thinking I'm stalking or harassing her.

—Lewd Behavior

Dear Lewd: We've gotten into what Freud would say for your "accident." But it is possible you are harboring feelings for Miranda that go beyond friendship? You

can't salvage this without taking a risk. Write her and ask why she hasn't responded—there could be another reason. If your fantasy letter is indeed the reason, playful temporary insanity. Beg for forgiveness.

Dear Annie:

My family likes to get to church 10 minutes early so we can find seats. Unfortunately, with two small kids, that doesn't always happen.

I find it appalling that so many people sit in the aisle seat of the pew when there is no one sitting in the middle. They refuse to give up their aisle seat or step out of the pew to let us pass. Maybe they don't know this is rude, so will you please educate them?

—Where is Hoosier Hospitality?

Dear Hoosier: Of course, any able-bodied person who selects an aisle seat should have the consideration to slide down when others enter, or stand up and move out of the way, so other arrivals can pass easily. Unless there is a physical reason why you cannot move, there is no excuse to sit there and block the row.

Dear Annie:

You recently printed a letter from a woman who was tired of receiving calls for her late husband, so she

would need to be one of those "flame-shooters" to explode in your faces, and there would be lifelong consequences. The next time your "friend" suggests playing that game, tell him you'd prefer to do something else.

Dear Abby:

Early this year, I lost my precious father to cancer. Mom and Dad's 50th wedding anniversary would have been in a few weeks, and we had started planning a big celebration. Now that Dad is gone, how can we acknowledge this day? It seems a shame to do nothing, since on her heart, Mom will always be "with" my father.

Is there a way to have a special acknowledgement of any kind?

— Grieving But Grateful in Atlanta

Dear Grateful: While a large celebration of your parents' marriage would not be appropriate, I see no reason why family members and close friends shouldn't take your mother out on this emotionally loaded occasion. Certainly, she should not be alone—and I am sure she would welcome the emotional support.

Letters for this column—

with your name and phone number—should be addressed to Dear Abby, P.O. Box 6940, Los Angeles CA 90069. Readers can write to Abby on the Internet at <http://www.psydresses.com/dearabby>

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looked up the number of the cemetery and gave it to one of the salesmen. Said: "The mental image of that man's reaction stopped the wave of grief I was feeling. I still smile when I think about it."

Let me tell you, this sort of thing can buy a lot of grief for the cemetery workers who handle these phone calls. One widow after said a "change of address" card for her late husband with the cemetery's address. We've received bank statements, insurance notices, etc., but we have no authority to open any of them.

I also will tell you that I've worked at the cemetery for over 20 years and have yet to see a man do this. Only widows like this "practical joke." I don't know if it's because men handle grief better or if they're just more sensible.

— Quincy, Ill.

Dear Quincy: Maybe they're simply less imaginative. Actually, we'd be the reason that that salesperson more often ask for "the man of the house." Nonetheless, we don't mean to encourage these practical jokes, so we thank you for letting us see the other side.

Annie's Mailbox is written by Kathy Mitchell and Marcy Sugar, longtime editors of the San Antonio Express-News. Please e-mail your questions to annie@mailbox.comcast.net, or write to: Annie's Mailbox, c/o Creators Syndicate, 5777 W. Centerville Blvd., Suite 700, Los Angeles, CA 90045.

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RELIGION

'Holy Huddle' helps football fans keep faith

BY BOBBY ROSS JR.

The Associated Press

DALLAS — For a long time, the Dallas Cowboys cost the Unity Church of Dallas people and money.

On Sundays when the Cowboys kicked off at noon, some members stayed home. Others left worship early — before tithing time — to avoid missing the opening snap.

"They were putting up announcements saying, 'Don't trample the children when you stampee out of here before the service ends,'" half-joked Denise Maindelde, 50.

Then church members Ken Sutherland and Mike Connor approached the pastor with a suggestion: Why not show the Cowboys game on a big screen in the church fellowship hall? The Rev. Ellen Debenport thought a "Holy Huddle" was a fine idea.

"I preach all the time that we need to live balanced lives," said Debenport, the 1,000-member church's senior minister. "If someone's interested in church and football and being with their families on Sunday, I think that's great. So if we can accommodate that and build community in the church at the same time, that's fine with me."

Across the football-crazed nation, the temptation to skip services in favor of the home team challenges many regular churchgoers this time of year.

Some, like Tim McMillen, who operates a Pittsburgh Steelers fan Web site, do the best they can. In one post, McMillen wrote that he would play on the church praise team, "then burn rubber, back home to catch the start of the

game."

"Any old ladies who get in my way coming out of church are gonna be very sorry," he joked.

Larry Ghan, an elder at the Central Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Pocatello, Idaho, said he almost always picks God over football.

Occasionally, though, a Minnesota Vikings kickoff at 11 a.m. Mountain time is just too much to resist.

On a recent Sunday, Ghan had little choice but to attend service. The congregation was counting on him to preside over the communion.

"My first commitment is to the Lord, so I'm going to be there," he said. "But that doesn't mean I'm not a little bit edgy and twichy wondering how the Vikings are doing."

In Brentwood, Tenn., south of Nashville, the lure of the Tennessee Titans played into one church's decision to start a Saturday night service.

"They get the same sermon and most of the same hymns," said the Rev. Howard Olds, senior pastor of Brentwood United Methodist Church.

Most importantly, they get Sunday morning free to watch the Titans, their children play in a youth soccer game or engage in other family activities, Olds said.

In the Green Bay, Wis., area, it's not uncommon for churches to review the Packers schedule before settling into the Christmas events. So when the NFL recently moved two noon games to 3 p.m., the Rev. Don Behrendt of Peace Lutheran Church found it difficult to live with his displeasure.

All of a sudden, the church's 4



Carol Scott, right, and others walk through a buffet line at the Unity Church of Dallas fellowship hall as they gather to watch the Dallas Cowboys take on the Minnesota Vikings following church service Nov. 21 in Dallas. Before this "Holy Huddle," some football fans stayed home from church. Others left worship early, before tithing time, to avoid missing the opening snap.

p.m. children's Christmas program found itself smack in the path of the Packers.

At the last minute, the church changed the December pageant to 1 p.m. to avoid the conflict. A newspaper editorial criticized the decision, describing any parent who would miss a child's Christmas program to watch a football game as a jerk.

"I would agree with that," Be-

hrendt said. "But you don't want kids to find out their parents are jerks any more than they have to."

At the Unity Church of Dallas, Holy Huddle has brought a halt to the previous 11:45 a.m. exodus of Cowboys fans.

In a fellowship hall with a piano and stained-glass windows, dozens of church members munch pizza, get to know each

other better (during commercials) and watch the first half of the game. At halftime, they all drive home, presumably in time to catch the second half.

"I really think it makes a difference," Debenport said. "If nothing else, it called attention to how many people were leaving, so they seem more likely to stay. And if they're really desperate to see the actual kickoff, they can do that here."

tobyMac's new CD puts a musical spin on diversity

BY BRIAN BOWERS

Stars and Stripes

When tobyMac envisions the Bible's shining city on a hill, he sees a diverse place.

It's a place without barriers dividing what he calls "God's artistic handiwork." So it seems natural for him to name a CD "Welcome to Diverse City."

"It's been something that's been important to me all my life," said tobyMac, whose new disc was nominated for a Grammy earlier this month.

"Diversity, to me, is in everything I do. From my record label, Geto Records, to my album and my family," said McKeehan, who has adopted biracial twins. "I want to live that way and not just proclaim it."

McKeehan grew up near Washington, D.C., and his childhood heroes had all different shades of skin. He started his career with the multiracial band he talked with his own plea for racial harmony with the song "Colored People." However, "I began traveling all around the United States and not everyone has had the privilege of being raised in a place that's so diverse ... and I wanted to welcome everyone to diversity."

"We will never be a truly shining city on the hill until we are diverse."

McKeehan's new disc comments on the issue in the title track and other songs, but true to its name, it's a very diverse package. Its themes range from praise, to relationships to the pressure of everyday life. Stylistically, it flows from hip-hop to funk to rock and back. Short transition tracks creatively blend the main songs together to form a cohesive and thoroughly enjoyable package.

It's a mix that has grabbed a lot of fans since its October release. The disc has been nominated for a Grammy for the year's best rock gospel album and the single "Gone" is planted atop the Christian radio charts.

The disc opens with "Welcome to Diverse City," by tobyMac, "Hey Now," a hip-hop proclamation that tobyMac's band — two years after their first solo effort, the acclaimed "Momentum." The disc bounds into hard rock with "Slam," which asserts

Today's praise

the message of Jesus is for everyone no matter their color or their sins. And the song "Diverse City" slides into a funk beat as it as it builds its case for human harmony.

The disc does an excellent job of translating the big picture into a personal view.

"Atmosphere" encourages someone in tears and alone. The pop-oriented "Gone" — the disc's first single and one of its best tracks — scolds a friend who's been unfaithful to his girlfriend. "Stories" describes the personal accounts of people who've "been down to the bottom," but remain certain that "God will see us through." And McKeehan offers a glimpse of his personal struggle against getting sucked into too many activities in "Gotta Go."

Although many of the topics are pretty heavy, much of the disc is quite light-hearted. "Gotta Go" and "TruDog" — a rap by his young

son Truett — are downright fun.

"So many times you would consider music coming from a Christian person, Christian music, as really heavy ... but I really wanted to put on some songs about a person walking through this world, a believer, having a good time," McKeehan said.

The disc's last song is a remix of "Atmosphere," featuring the voices of dc talk bandmates Kevin Max and Michael Tate.

"I just sat there with this song messing with it ... and, every time I sat there, I heard Michael and Kevin's voices in it," McKeehan said.

So, he called the pair and they agreed to participate. However, that doesn't mean a reunion tour is imminent.

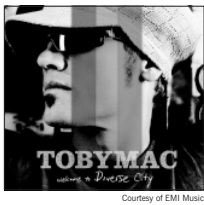
"dc talk is alive and well," McKeehan said. "We're climbing separate creative mountains right now ... For now, there's a lot of life in this climb called solo."

Finally, McKeehan wanted to pass along a message to the military community: "I would like to say thank you to all of the men and women serving our nation and sacrificing for our freedom. And may God bless them."

On the Web: www.tobymac.com.

Today's Praise is a roundup of news and reviews from the contemporary Christian music industry. It appears on the Religion page.

E-mail Brian Bowers at: bowers@stripes.osd.mil.



Courtesy of EMI Music

"Welcome to Diverse City," by tobyMac, has been nominated for a 2004 Grammy for Rock Gospel Album.

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Early 9-2 mark shows McElhiney can coach

BY TERESA M. WALKER

The Associated Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — Maybe she can coach after all.

Critics scoffed when Ashley McElhiney was selected as the first woman coach of a men's pro basketball team. They called it a mere publicity stunt, a ploy by a new ABA franchise desperate to make a splash.

McElhiney, 23 last July, had never coached before taking this job, but has been much too busy with the Nashville Rhythm to worry about detractors.

"Honestly, it really doesn't matter right now," McElhiney said. "To me and any players right now, I am just the coach. As far as what everyone else says, it doesn't bother me either way. On this job or any other job, I'll know what my purpose is."

McElhiney couldn't have started much better, coaching the Rhythm to six straight victories to open the season on the way to a 9-2 record.

Owner Sally Anthony, a singer with her own record label and a Web site promoting female artists, wanted to hire a woman coach to break down another barrier. General manager Daniel Bucher insists they found the right person for this market.

"If it was a publicity stunt, we would have done something really wacky," Bucher said.

The key to McElhiney's early success has been a 10-man team that cares more about her as a person than as a woman.

The biggest signing was Dontae Jones, the 21st overall pick in the 1996 NBA draft by the New York Knicks. Out of the NBA since 1999, Jones had been playing around the world the past few years, most recently in Greece.

Jones couldn't pass up the chance to return home and also wanted to be a part of history while making a final attempt at the NBA. He's leading the ABA with 31.3 points per game.

"It's going to go a long way toward how women succeed from here on," Jones said. "If I can help her continue to raise that bar, then I'm doing my job. If I can help her, it helps me a whole lot, being able to work with her and being able to show people I'm very coachable no matter what the circumstances."

Whether McElhiney could coach at all, let alone handle a men's team, was the biggest question when Anthony announced the hiring May 17.



Nashville Rhythm coach Ashley McElhiney, right, talks to Dontae Jones during a game last week. At age 23, McElhiney is the first woman hired to coach a men's professional team.

Sure, McElhiney has been a star point guard most of her life — she set a handful of records at Vanderbilt — but coaching from the sideline isn't running an offense on the floor.

So McElhiney picked other coaches' brains for details — how to run drills, warm-ups, rotations, defenses and even handling players on and off the court.

Her mentors include former Vanderbilt coach Jim Foster, now at Ohio State; Vanderbilt men's coach Kevin Stallings; and Belmont men's coach Rick Byrd.

The one piece of advice that helped the most? Be prepared and confident.

"If I've done my homework and preparation and I'm confident in what I'm presenting to my players, there should be no questions and no doubts," McElhiney said.

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AFN-Sports, 1:30 p.m. NBA: Denver at Orlando (old).

AFN-Atlantic, 7 p.m. NFL: Minnesota at Detroit (old).

AFN-Pacific, 7 p.m. NFL: Buffalo at Cincinnati (old).

AFN-Atlantic, 7 p.m. NFL: Seattle at N.Y. Jets (old).

AFN-Atlantic, 7 p.m. NFL: Denver at Kansas City (old).

AFN-Atlantic, 7 p.m. NFL: New Orleans at Tampa Bay (old).

AFN-Sports, 10 p.m. NFL: Jacksonville at Green Bay (old).

AFN-Sports and Radio, 10 p.m. NFL: St. Louis at Arizona.

Monday

AFN-Atlantic, 1 a.m. NFL: Denver at Kansas City (old).

AFN-Sports and Radio, 2:30 a.m. NFL: Baltimore at Indianapolis (old).

AFN-Sports, 9:30 a.m. Golf: Three Tour Championships (old).

AFN-Sports, 1 p.m. College basketball: North Carolina at Virginia Tech (old).

AFN-Sports, 3 p.m. College basketball: Florida State at Maryland (old).

AFN-Sports, 5 p.m. College basketball: North Carolina State at Washington (old).

All Times Central European Time; did indicate any broadcast. All listings are subject to change. Visit www.afn.net for more information.

Pro football

NFL

AMERICAN CONFERENCE

East W L T Pct PF PA

N.Y. England 4 0 0 692 299

N.J. Giants 6 0 0 692 299

Miami 2 1 1 154 239

South W L T Pct PF PA

Indianapolis 3 0 769 457

Jacksonville 6 0 538 220

Tennessee 4 0 385 259

West W L T Pct PF PA

Pittsburgh 12 1 0 523 390

Cincinnati 5 0 538 270

Cleveland 6 0 462 296

San Diego 10 0 689 297

West W L T Pct PF PA

San Diego 10 0 689 297

Dallas 6 0 515 294

Oakland 5 0 365 394

NATIONAL CONFERENCE

East W L T Pct PF PA

Philadelphia 5 0 689 297

N.Y. Giants 5 0 689 297

Dallas 4 0 385 238

Washington 4 0 385 238

South W L T Pct PF PA

Atlanta 3 0 769 457

Carolina 6 0 462 299

New York Jets 6 0 385 259

West W L T Pct PF PA

Green Bay 5 0 615 347

Detroit 5 0 538 323

Indianapolis 6 0 385 238

West W L T Pct PF PA

Seattle 6 0 538 295

St. Louis 6 0 462 260

Arizona 4 0 385 294

Saturday's games

San Francisco at N.Y. Giants

San Francisco at Carolina

Atlanta at Carolina

Sunday's games

Houston at Cincinnati

San Francisco at Detroit

Seattle at N.Y. Jets

Denver at Kansas City

Buffalo at Philadelphia

Dallas at Cleveland

St. Louis at Arizona

San Francisco at Tampa Bay

Baltimore at Oakland

Baltimore at Indianapolis

New England at Miami

Friday's games

Green Bay at St. Louis

Saturday, Dec. 25

Oakland at Kansas City

Denver at Detroit

College football

Division I-A playoffs

Championship

Friday, Dec. 17

At **Alfred Russel Field**

Championship

Monday, Dec. 18

At **Alfred Russel Field**

Championship

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Monday, Dec. 18

At **Alfred Russel Field**

Championship

6. Baylor (8-1) did not play. Next: vs. Florida, Sunday.

7. USC (9-1) did not play. Next: at Marquette, Sunday (1-1) did not play. Next: at No. 23 Arizona State, Tuesday.

8. Oregon (9-2) did not play. Next: vs. Oregon, Saturday.

9. Texas Tech (9-1) did not play. Next: at TCU, Sunday.

10. Oklahoma State (8-1) did not play. Next: vs. Texas A&M-Corpus Christi, Saturday.

11. Kansas State (8-1) did not play. Next: vs. Arkansas State at Las Vegas, Saturday.

12. Kansas State (8-1) did not play. Next: vs. Drake, Thursday.

13. Kansas State (8-1) did not play. Next: vs. Saint Joseph's, Wednesday.

14. Kansas State (8-1) did not play. Next: at Iowa, Sunday.

15. UCLA (8-1) did not play. Next: at Illinois, Sunday.

16. BYU at Malibu, Calif., Monday.

17. Maryland (7-1) did not play. Next: vs. Oregon State, Monday.

18. Oregon (9-1) lost to Wake Forest 65-7. Next: at Long Beach State, Monday.

19. Purdue (1-2) did not play. Next: vs. No. 3 Indiana, Saturday.

20. DePaul (7-2) did not play. Next: at St. Peter's, Tuesday.

21. Rutgers (5-2) did not play. Next: vs. Clemson, Saturday.

22. Kansas State (7-1) did not play. Next: at New Mexico, Saturday.

23. Iowa (8-1) did not play. Next: at Drake, Sunday.

24. Kansas State (5-2) did not play. Next: vs. Oklahoma State at Springfield, Monday.

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Looking to rebuild, Nets acquire Carter

By TOM CANAVAN
The Associated Press

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. — After dismantling the team in the summer and aggravating Jason Kidd, the New Jersey Nets began the job of rebuilding as well as repairing their relationship with their best player.

They started by acquiring five-time All-Star Vince Carter from the Toronto Raptors on Friday for center Alonzo Mourning, forwards Aaron Williams and Jerome Williams, and two first-round draft picks.

While Kidd said Carter can "change the look of not just the franchise, but the game," the Nets' star guard did not seem overjoyed with the deal.

"Business always gets in the way of basketball," he said. "My job is to go out there and perform on the court and get some wins."

Nets owner Bruce Ratner was a little more excited.

"Vince provides an immediate impact and gives our fans an electrifying team to watch every night," Ratner said. "Most importantly, we are committed to winning."



Jason Kidd, left, and Vince Carter are now playing for the same team after the New Jersey Nets acquired Carter from Toronto.

There were many who doubted that after the Nets sent All-Star forward Kenyon Martin to Denver in what was seen as a cost-saving move by the team's new owners. Shooting guard Kerry Kittles later was traded to the Clippers and well-liked Luecio Harris was released.

Kidd wasn't happy about those decisions, but conceded the Nets are trying to

improve the roster.

"You don't worry about what happened in the past," he said after Friday's 89-84 loss at Memphis. "That's what the Nets are trying to do, and I'm trying to do the same thing."

Martin, Kittles and Harris were key members of a team that went to the NBA Finals in 2002 and '03.

The moves not only decimated the team, they left Kidd hoping to be traded.

Carter and Richard Jefferson playing his wings might soften that approach, but Kidd wouldn't speculate on his future. "I'm a Net until told otherwise," he said.

Coach Lawrence Frank was delighted to have Carter on his bench.

"He's one of those guys when his team gets the ball in his hands at the end of the game, as an opposing coach, it makes you nervous because he can get wherever he wants on the floor," Frank said.

The trade essentially sends three players over 30 to Canada for a 27-year-old who is among the league's best when healthy.

Carter, whose contract runs through the 2008 season, and Williams must pass physicals for the deal to become official. They have 48 hours to report to their new teams.

Mourning, who had a kidney transplant in December, does not have to pass a physical. Thorn is unsure whether Mourning will report to the Raptors, but the deal is not contingent on that.

Carter comes to the Nets with career averages of 24.3 points, 5.2 rebounds, 3.9 assists, 1.33 steals and 1.03 blocks in 403 games over seven NBA seasons.

Carter, who was in Indianapolis, was excited about the deal, said Thorn, adding the swingman probably won't play until Tuesday in Charlotte. Carter has been out with a strained left Achilles' tendon.

Thorn said the Nets still have a long way to go to make the playoffs, but that if they make the postseason they would be a formidable foe.

"I think it's a statement from ownership that they are willing to spend on a quality player," he said. "We are not here to wait three or four years and hope our draft choices pan out."

The two first-round draft picks the Nets sent to Toronto were acquired in the Martin deal. They were Philadelphia's first-round pick in 2005 and Denver's first round pick in 2006.

Knicks rally to beat 76ers in overtime

The Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — Allan Houston would rather be taking the clutch shots than thinking about them. After missing most of the season coming back from an injury, Houston made one of the biggest baskets yet for New York.

"Sitting around watching, you picture yourself making big shots," he said. Houston hit the three-point

with a 4.0 seconds left in regulation, Kurt Thomas scored six points in overtime, and the New York Knicks rallied from a 19-point deficit to beat the Philadelphia 76ers 113-107 on Friday night.

"Allan Houston's shot is money. That's why we got him the ball," Thomas said.

Thomas opened overtime with a basket, and the Sixers never led again. Jerome Williams had a three-point play, and Thomas and Aaron Crawford sealed the win with four free throws in the final 22 seconds.

Stephen Marbury led the Knicks with 27 points, Houston had 15, Williams 13, and Thomas 14 points and 11 rebounds.

Kenny Thomas scored a season-high 26 points, and Allen Iverson had 24 for Philadelphia, which had a three-game winning streak snapped.

"We just collapsed. It's as simple as that," Iverson said.

After playing only six minutes in the first three quarters, Jerome Williams played the entire fourth quarter and scored eight points. Stephen Marbury scored 10 points in the fourth.

Pacers 89, Raptors 86: At In-

dianapolis, Jamaal Tinsley scored 17 of his 22 points in the second half to lead Indiana.

Rookie center David Harrison added a career-high 22 points and had seven rebounds, and Jeff Foster had 10 points and 18 rebounds for the Pacers, who won their second straight after a seven-game losing streak.

Grizzlies 89, Nets 84: Jason Williams had a season-high 27 points and six assists to lead host Memphis over short-handed New Jersey.

Richard Jefferson, who had 18 of his 26 points in the fourth quarter, got the Nets within 85-84 with 16 seconds left when he followed Jason Kidd's missed layup. But four free throws by James Posey in the final 12 seconds sealed Memphis' victory.

Trait Blazers 100, Hawks 84: At Atlanta, Zach Randolph scored 23 points, and Darius Miles added 20 to lead Portland past Atlanta.

Derek Anderson added 15 points for Portland, which broke a two-game losing streak.

Celtics 114, Jazz 106: Gary Payton scored a season-high 27 points and added 11 assists to lift the host Celtics.

The Celtics hit 56 percent of their shots to take a 58-40 lead at halftime and stretched that to as much as 21, leading 84-63 on two free throws by Marcus Banks with 1:36 left in the third quarter. The closest Utah came after that was eight points, the first time on Carlos Boozer's layup with 3:56 to play that made it 97-89.

Timberwolves 113, Clippers 86: At Minneapolis, Wally Szczerbiak scored a season-high 27 points, including 11 in the third quarter.

Szczerbiak pumped in seven



Philadelphia 76ers' Willie Green, right, tries to stop New York Knicks' Stephen Marbury from getting a pass off in the first half Friday.

quick points in the first two minutes of the third quarter, part of an 11-1 run that gave the Timberwolves a 58-43 lead. Minnesota stretched its lead throughout the fourth and cruised to its largest margin of victory this season.

Spurs 83, Hornets 67: At New Orleans, Tim Duncan had 19 points and 12 rebounds to lead San Antonio to its third straight victory and 11th win in 13 games.

Rookie Beno Udrih scored 12 points in 18 minutes, and Manu Ginobili and Tony Parker each added 10 points for the Spurs. Robert Horry hit three three-pointers during a key run in the second half, helping San Antonio extend its lead to double figures.

Rockets 100, Warriors 83: Tracy McGrady had 27 points and nine rebounds, and Yao Ming

added 15 points and a season-high 17 rebounds. Bob Sura just missed his third career triple-double with 24 points, nine assists and eight rebounds for host Houston, and sat out much of the fourth quarter with the Rockets leading by as many as 23.

Heat 107, Nuggets 100: Dwyane Wade scored 25 points, and Shaquille O'Neal had 20 to help Miami win its seventh straight. The defeat was doubly tough for the visiting Nuggets, who led forward Carmelo Anthony to a sprained left ankle.

Wizards 120, Lakers 116 (OT): At Los Angeles, Gilbert Arenas scored 37 points, Larry Hughes had 31, and Washington won for the first time on the Lakers' floor in almost 12 years.

The Wizards overcame a 36-point, 14-assist, 10-rebound performance by Kobe Bryant.

Mavs fans give injured troops seats to game

The Associated Press

DALLAS — About 140 U.S. soldiers wounded in Iraq and Afghanistan were at sit courtside at a Dallas Mavericks game Saturday night, thanks to season-ticket holders who offered their seats in a show of gratitude.

"It's a small way for me to show some appreciation for what they've done for us," ticket holder Jim Leslie said. "I still don't think it's enough."

The soldiers from Brooke Army Medical Center near San Antonio will fly to Dallas — on a chartered jet donated by American Airlines — to see the Mavericks play the Atlanta Hawks. They will be treated to free food and drink and have their pictures taken with Mavericks players.

Team owner Mark Cuban said in an e-mail: "This is a chance for these servicemen and women to feel the admiration and respect of 20,000 people, reinforcing for them that we as a nation feel grateful for what they have done for us."

Season-ticket holder Neal Hawks began offering seats to soldiers last season. This year, he applied for season-ticket holders' seats and got 133 tickets worth roughly \$150,000, in the front row.

"Virtually everyone said I could save their tickets," Hawks said. "I even had a couple season-ticket holders who had already given their tickets away and get them back."

Cpl. J.R. Martinez, 21, attended a game last season while recovering from severe burns when his Humvee hit a land mine in Iraq. He said many of the wounded soldiers are "probably in the depression stage."

"For them to go and be able to feel that energy, it's definitely going to help their morale," he said.

James Madison wins first Div. I-AA title

The Associated Press

CHATTANOOGA, Tenn. — James Madison coach Mickey Matthews saw that Montana had problems against the run, and the Ducks exploited it to win their first Division I-AA championship.

Maurice Fenner and quarterback Justin Rascati ran for two touchdowns apiece in a 31-21 victory over Montana on Friday night.

The Ducks (13-2) rushed for 314 yards.

"We thought we could run it on them," Matthews said. "Athletically, they weren't like some of the defenses we had played."

Fenner ran 29 times for 164 yards, and Rascati carried 11 times for 57 yards and completed 13 of 18 passes for 132 yards.

The Ducks took the lead for good after Fenner scored from 1 yard in the third quarter, and Rascati sealed it with a 6-yard TD run in the fourth.

James Madison's fans threw water, streamers and some even jumped down from the stands onto the field to celebrate with the team as the final seconds ticked off the clock. They stayed

College football roundup

goal posts.

The Ducks were the first team to reach the I-AA title game by winning all three playoff games on the road, advancing past the second round for the first time.

The two-time champion Grizzlies (12-3), playing in their fifth year game and led by Colorado transfer quarterback Craig Ochs, took a 21-17 lead in the third quarter, but couldn't stop James Madison's rushing attack.

Division III

Linfield 28, Mary Hardin-Baylor 21 At Salem, Va., Riley Jenkins turned a swing pass into a go-ahead touchdown with 5:51 to play Saturday as Linfield won its first NCAA Division III national championship by beating Mary Hardin-Baylor (13-2).

The 10-yard score came one play after Zach Fleming disrupted Crusaders punter Hunter Hamrick by getting quickly into the backfield, causing Hamrick to

on the field during a short fireworks show while security officials took down the



James Madison's Maurice Fenner (32) rushed for 164 yards and two touchdowns as the Ducks defeated Montana 31-21 for the Division I-AA championship Friday night in Chattanooga, Tenn.

fumble the ball and fall on it on his 10.

One play later, Brett Elliott hit Jenkins out of the backfield.

Jenkins made a one-handed grab, eluded two defenders down the sideline and dove into the end zone, capping a perfect season for the Wildcats (13-0).

Elliott finished 20-for-34 for 282 yards with two interceptions and two TD passes. The Utah transfer finished the season with an NCAA record 61 touchdown passes.

Indiana hires Hoeggner as head football coach

The Associated Press

BLOOMINGTON, Ind. — Miami of Ohio's Terry Hoeggner was hired as Indiana's football coach Friday and vowed to take the Hoosiers to the Rose Bowl for the first time since 1968.

Hoeggner, 48-23 in six seasons at Miami, takes over a team with 10 straight losing seasons.

"Can we win here? There is no doubt about it," Hoeggner said. "We're going to build a championship football team here. That is no joke."

Indiana fired Gerry DiNardo after ending a 3-8 season with a 63-24 loss to rival Purdue. DiNardo went 8-27 in three years.

Indiana has only been to that postseason game once and hasn't had a winning season since going 6-5 in 1994. Crowds averaged about 28,500 this season in 52,000-seat Memorial Stadium — down from about 35,000 the year before.

Hoeggner, 57, grew up in the northeastern Indiana town of Woodburn.

Rauffer gives Germany first Alpine victory in 13 years

VAL GARDENA, Italy — German Michael Rauffer captured a downhill in strong wind Saturday for his first World Cup victory, a race in which all the favorites

Sports briefs

conditions for his 14th-place finish. The course was shortened slightly because of the gusts.

"When the wind pulls you there is no way to get around that," the American said. "It was a tough day for me. It makes it hard to go fast when the wind is in your face."

Rauffer covered the classic Saslong course in 1 minute, 50.59 seconds, giving the German men's team its first World Cup win in almost 13 years. Juerg Gruenfelder of Switzerland finished only 0.05 seconds behind for his first top-three finish. Up-and-coming Austrian Johann Grugger was third, 0.33 seconds back.

With 798 points, Miller still held the commanding lead in the overall standings over his main rivals. Defending overall champion Hermann Maier (419 points) came in 37th and fellow Austrian Michael Walchhofer (395), winner of Friday's super-G, was 20th.

The women's World Cup downhill was also postponed by D'Iserre, France, was postponed by a snowstorm that could also cancel a race on Sunday.

Irish: Willingham's firing called school's integrity into question

IRISH, FROM BACK PAGE

Already reeling from the Davie years, Notre Dame had been snubbed by Jon Gruden and Oregon coach Mike Bellotti. In came O'Leary, an Irish Catholic who had long dreamed of coaching at Notre Dame and promised to wake up the echoes, as the school's fight song says.

Later, White would say O'Leary was like "something out of central casting."

But O'Leary wasn't quite what he seemed. He didn't have the master's degree in education that he claimed, nor had he played college football for three years. O'Leary quickly resigned, but it was humiliating nonetheless for Notre Dame.

So when the Irish struggled under Willingham, a group of alumni sent a letter to the board of trustees, expressing concern about the direction of the football program.

"We weren't talking about two years of Tyrone Willingham, we were talking about 10 years," said Tim Kelley, a 1964 graduate and one of the authors of the letter, sent last January.

"Football is the emotional engine that drives Notre Dame. We absolutely believe that," Kelley said. "It was going down the drain and people weren't doing anything about it."

The alumni got their wish — but at what price? In firing Willingham, the first black head coach at Notre Dame, the Irish essentially put a won-loss record ahead of integrity.

White didn't agree with the decision and had only high praise for Willingham, but he wasn't prepared to "break ranks" with university leaders. The Rev. Edward Mal-

loy, Notre Dame's president, was prepared, saying he was "embarrassed" by the firing and hadn't supported it.

It didn't end there. Malloy's assistant shaved her head in protest, and T-shirts supporting Willingham were soon spotted around town. Dave Duerson, a former player and board of trustees member, said the school had badly mishandled the dismissal, causing a "major PR nightmare."

"Personnel decisions are always difficult, transitions are always difficult, and this is no different," said the Rev. John Heenan, the incoming president.

Getting snubbed by their coach of choice didn't help. Former Irish assistant Urban Meyer was expected to jump when Notre Dame beckoned with his dream job. But Meyer was already leaning toward Florida when Willingham was fired, and his meeting with Notre Dame officials turned out to be little more than a show of respect.

In another sign of how mortal the Irish had become, top candidates weren't lining up. One, Jeff Tedford, fell out of contention when he signed an extension at Cal — a school whose defining moment in football history is a touchdown run through the Stanford backfield.

All this has by no means left the Irish

with a crisis of confidence. Notre Dame has already begun patching up its internal fractures.

Jenkins and Malloy have closed ranks, often using the same words to answer the toughest questions. Jenkins is taking full blame for calling the meeting to fire Willingham, saying there was no "undue influence" from the board of trustees.

He also plays down questions of dissension, saying the differing opinions simply reflect the passion people have for Notre Dame. As for the school's integrity, Jenkins and Malloy point to Notre Dame's graduation rate — 99 percent overall for players who stay at least four years.

While Jenkins did apologize to the Faculty Board of Athletics on Wednesday, according to a copy of his speech obtained by the South Bend Tribune, he said the best way to move forward is to act as Notre Dame always has.

"Only in the sense of being what we are in the best way we can, that's the only repair work we have to do," Jenkins said. "That's what we need to do to get people believing in us. I think people will respond positively to that."

Former coach Ara Parseghian, one of the most successful at Notre Dame, noted that the Irish have had rough patches before — and have endured.

Certainly, he said, the names Rockne, the Gipper and the Four Horsemen come to mind, as do 11 national championships.

But there were some pretty lean years under Faust and Joe Kuharich, too. When Parseghian took over in 1964, the Irish hadn't had a winning season in five years and had gone 15 years without a national title.

Weis has no interest in looking back. He takes the job with no illusions, either. A 1978 graduate, he knows all too well the rigors of Notre Dame's academic standards.

And after winning two of his three Super Bowl rings as the New England Patriots' offensive coordinator, he doesn't care to discuss tough schedules.

"The people that complain about those things are looking for excuses," he said. "If I answered that any other way, what I would be doing is letting the players have a reason for or have an excuse for failure."

As bleak as things looked the past two weeks, almost all will be forgiven if Weis whips together a season or two of that old magic.

For some, though, Notre Dame will never be quite the same.

"If you're in the limelight, there are always going to be ups and downs because nobody's perfect," said the Rev. Theodore Hesburgh, the school's president emeritus. "For that reason, you will have ups and downs in every human endeavor. But the important thing is to keep trying, and to keep that goal up there high."

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Agent: Clement, Boston reach 3-year deal

The Associated Press

BOSTON — The Boston Red Sox, moving to a hole in their rotation after Pedro Martinez's departure, have agreed on a three-year contract worth \$25 million with right-hander Matt Clement, according to the pitcher's agent.

The defending champions, who lost Martinez to the New York Mets on Thursday, beat out several other teams that made similar offers to the hard-throwing Clement.

"The overriding factor became where he thought would be the best chance for him to win for all three years," Clement's agent, Barry Axelrod, told MLB.com.

Clement, despite a 9-13 record with the Chicago Cubs last season, became a priority of several teams after Martinez went to the Mets, Carl Pavano to the New York Yankees, and Tim Hudson — via trade — to the Atlanta Braves.

Clement, who had a 3.68 ERA and 190 strikeouts in 181 innings last season, also was drawn to Boston because he has family in Pennsylvania, said Axelrod, who also confirmed the deal to The Boston Globe.

"The thought of his dad and other family members being able to easily get to Boston to see him pitch became a big factor for him," Axelrod said. "Who wouldn't want to pitch in front of their family at Fenway Park?"

Axelrod and a Red Sox spokesman did not immediately return calls from The Associated Press on Saturday.

The team usually does not comment until an player reaches a physical, which Axelrod said could take place early next week.

The 30-year-old Clement is 69-75 with a 4.34 ERA in his career with the San Diego Padres, Florida Marlins and Cubs.

The Red Sox on Wednesday signed left-hander David Wells to a two-year, \$8 million contract that would be worth \$18 million if he reaches all his incentives. The team has shown little interest in re-signing free agent pitcher Derek Lowe.

D.C. officials meeting to save team

WASHINGTON — Two prominent politicians who will have a significant say in whether the Expos move to the nation's capital plan to meet Monday to try to save the suddenly wobbly deal.

Mayor Anthony Williams will meet with Linda Cropp, chair of the District of Columbia Council, who earlier this week introduced an amendment that could endanger the move.

The proposed move hinges on the city having a stadium financing package acceptable to major league baseball in place by Dec. 31.

Cropp's amendment to the mayor's stadium financing plan requires that at least half the stadium funding come from a private source. The amendment was approved late Tuesday night.

Major League Baseball, calling the amendment "wholly unacceptable," responded to the adoption of Cropp's provision by shutting down the team's business and promotional operations.

Williams and Cropp will meet Monday at Cropp's request, her spokesman, Mark Johnson, confirmed Friday night. Cropp has asked for a meeting with major league officials "as soon as possible," Johnson said.

Several private financiers have pitched funding schemes that could pay for as

much as the full cost of building the stadium, city officials said.

Alfonseca rejoins Marlins

MIAMI — Free-agent reliever Antonio Alfonseca signed a one-year contract Friday to rejoin his former team, the Florida Marlins, who revised their offer when a routine physical disclosed a herniated disc in the right-hander's back.

Alfonseca will receive the league minimum \$300,000 and can earn an additional \$1.7 million in incentives, said his agent, Juan Iglesias. The deal includes an option for a second year for Alfonseca if he pitches in 65 games next season.

Alfonseca underwent season-ending back surgery in 2001, but was healthy in 2004.

Last season, Alfonseca appeared in a career-high 79 games for Atlanta and had a career-best ERA of 2.57. He pitched for Florida from 1997 to 2001.

White Sox reach one-year contract with outfielder Perez

CHICAGO — The Chicago White Sox agreed to terms with outfielder Tony Perez on a \$1 million, one-year deal Friday, avoiding arbitration.

Perez hit .246 with five homers and 40 RBIs last season, his first with the White Sox after being acquired from the New York Mets on March 27. The left-hander hit .397 with runners in scoring position. He played 49 games in right field, 25 in center and 12 in left, and made 69 starts.

Perez has a career average of .269 with 23 homers and 154 RBIs in five seasons with the New York Mets and White Sox.

Renteria officially joins Red Sox

BOSTON — Edgar Renteria passed a

physical and signed a four-year contract with the Boston Red Sox on Friday, bringing the All-Star shortstop to the World Series champions.

The Red Sox announced Renteria's reported \$40 million deal at a news conference at Fenway Park.

Renteria's agreement includes a team option for 2009, when he will be 34.

In nine seasons — three with Florida and six with St. Louis — Renteria has won two Gold Gloves and been on four All-Star teams.

Martinez continues to lash out at Red Sox for not re-signing him

SANTO DOMINGO, Dominican Republic — Pedro Martinez returned home Friday and bashed the team he led to a World Series title. He knocked the Boston Red Sox for their front-office moves and negotiating tactics, and predicted a rough season awaits.

"They will field the best bat team in baseball history," Martinez said at a news conference Friday.

The three-time Cy Young award winner said the "Mets showed more respect in days than Boston did in seven years."

Red Sox principal owner John Henry said the club "offered Pedro exactly what he said it would take to sign him" when team officials visited Martinez in the Dominican Republic on Dec. 8.

"Our organization went out of our way to treat Pedro with the greatest respect over the past three years. I am surprised and very disappointed by the continuing negative comments in that regard," Henry said Friday in an e-mail to The Associated Press.

"Nevertheless, I wish him great success with the Mets."

Brazoban, 24, made his major league debut this season with Dodgers, going 6-2 with a 2.48 ERA.

Navarro, a catcher, made his big league debut this year after rapid progress in the Yankees' minor league system. Duncan, a third baseman, also is regarded as a prize prospect.

Vazquez, 28, was an All-Star in his first season since being traded from Miami to the Yankees on July 30. He was 14-10 with a 4.91 ERA, but had a 9.53 ERA in three games in the postseason.

Penny, 26, was traded from Florida to Los Angeles on July 30, but saw limited action for Los Angeles because of a problem in his right arm. He was 9-10 with a 3.15 ERA for both clubs.

Brazoban, 24, made his major league debut this season with Dodgers, going 6-2 with a 2.48 ERA.

Navarro, a catcher, made his big league debut this year after rapid progress in the Yankees' minor league system. Duncan, a third baseman, also is regarded as a prize prospect.

Teams still working on details of Johnson trade

BY BEN WALKER

The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Randy Johnson, Shawn Green and Javier Vazquez are still waiting to hear where they're going to play next season.

The New York Yankees, Arizona and Los Angeles spent Friday trying to put the finishing touches on the megadeal that would move the three All-Stars.

A day after the three teams quickly put the major players in place, the clubs worked to resolve the issues still holding up the trade — money, mostly.

If there is an agreement to put Johnson in Yankees pinstripes, New York plans to ask for a 72-hour window to negotiate a contract extension with the Big Unit before completing the swap, a baseball source told The Associated Press on the condition of anonymity.

The Yankees were willing to send Vazquez and top prospects Dioner Navarro and Eric Duncan to Los Angeles as a way to get Johnson. Los Angeles would deal Green and pitchers Brad Penny and Yency Brazoban to the Diamondbacks.

"We're at the point where we've decided the best thing we can do is have no comment," Diamondbacks managing partner Ken Kendrick said.

Johnson and Green have no-trade clauses. While Johnson wants to play for the Yankees,



AP

Arizona Diamondbacks pitcher Randy Johnson was waiting to find out whether he'll be staying in Arizona or moving to New York.

Green might prefer to stay close to home in Southern California.

"I think Shawn always envisioned finishing his career with the Dodgers," agent Greg Genske said. "But if a trade is put in place, he's going to consider all of his options."

At 41, Johnson is owed \$16 million in the last year of his contract. The five-time Cy Young winner has long been coveted by Yankees owner George Steinbrenner, who spent the offseason meeting with top club officials at Legends Field, their spring training home.

"I think Shawn always envisioned finishing his career with the Dodgers. But if a trade is put in place, he's going to consider all of his options."

Greg Genske

Shawn Green's agent

Green also is set to make \$16 million, a year after slumping to .266 with 28 home runs and 86 RBIs. The Diamondbacks might be in good position to lure the 31-year-old outfielder to the desert — his former agent, Jeff Moorad, is Arizona's new chief executive officer.

The Dodgers had a couple of things to clear up, too.

After losing free agents Adrian Beltré and Steve Finley, Los Angeles might be reluctant to trade away its lone remaining power hitter. Plus, there's a money matter: Vazquez is due \$35.5 million over the next three years and the Dodgers might want the Yankees to pick up some of that cost, perhaps so much that the deal would need approval from the commissioner's office.

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Kentucky's Patrick Sparks sinks the last of three free throws with 0.6 seconds remaining as the Wildcats came back to beat Louisville 60-58.

Wildcat strike

Kentucky overcomes poor play and 16-point deficit to hand a stunning setback to archrival Louisville

BY CHRIS DUNCAN

The Associated Press

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — Patrick Sparks sank three free throws with less than a second left to cap his 25-point performance and complete ninth-ranked Kentucky's big comeback for a 60-58 victory over No. 13 Louisville and coach Rick Pitino on Saturday.

The Wildcats (7-1), who trailed 32-16 at halftime, were down 58-57 after Larry O'Bannon hit two free throws for Louisville with 15.2 seconds to go.

Kentucky coach Tubby Smith called timeout with 4.8 seconds left to set up the decisive play. Sparks inbounded the ball, then received a pass in the corner. He pump-faked, then jumped to shoot a three-pointer and was fouled by Louisville forward Ellis Myles.

The buzzer sounded an instant later.

After official J.B. Caldwell and referee Gerald Boudreaux checked a TV replay, Sparks stepped to the free-throw line with 0.6 seconds on the clock.

Sparks, a 71 percent career shooter from the line, coolly swished all three shots. O'Bannon's desperation heave from

half-court wasn't close, and the Wildcats snapped a two-game losing streak to their archrivals and former coach Pitino.

Pitino coached Kentucky from 1989 through 1997, winning the 1996 NCAA championship. After a stint with the NBA's Boston Celtics, he took over at Louisville in 2001.

O'Bannon scored 16 to lead Louisville (6-2).

The Cardinals' defense dominated the game until Sparks carried the Cats back in the final five minutes.

The Western Kentucky transfer hit his fifth three-pointer with 4:45 left and converted a three-point play with 2:55 remaining to shrink a 10-point deficit to four. Little-used walk-on Ravi Moss drew Kentucky to within one with a three-pointer from the corner with 2:07 to play.

Two free throws by Keleena Azubuike gave Kentucky a 55-54 lead, its first since the score was 5-4.

The Cardinals went four minutes without a basket until Francisco Garcia barked in a drive with 54 seconds left. Azubuike answered with a layup 20 seconds later to put Kentucky up 57-56.

O'Bannon drew a blocking foul

call with 15 seconds left, and Smith protested by pounding the scorer's table and nearly falling down as he stomped the floor.

But Sparks had the answer, handing Pitino only his second December loss in four seasons at Louisville.

Louisville shut down Kentucky's offense early with a sticky, trapping zone defense. The Cardinals went on an 11-0 run during Kentucky's eight-minute scoring drought.

The Cardinals — with no active player taller than 6-foot-8 — dominated the taller Wildcats inside in the first half, outscoring them 18-6 and outrebounding them 22-13. The flustered Wildcats missed 19 of 24 shot from the field (21 percent) in the first 20 minutes.

Louisville freshman Juan Palacios, who had 11 points in the first half, went to the bench with 17:16 left in the game when he was poked in the left eye going for a rebound. He did not return.

After Palacios departed, the Cardinals allowed Kentucky to stay close with sloppy play by their own. Sparks sank two three-pointers after consecutive Louisville turnovers to draw the Cats within 48-44 with just under seven minutes remaining.

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Since missing three games with a shoulder injury, Jets quarterback Chad Pennington has thrown two touchdown passes and four interceptions. He had thrown three interceptions in his first nine games this season.

AP

Jets QB Pennington shoulders a burden

BY ANDREA ADELSON

The Associated Press

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. — Chad Pennington goes into the toughest stretch of the season after one of the worst performances of his career.

The Jets quarterback was off during the 17-6 loss at Pittsburgh, throwing three interceptions while missing receivers with passes thrown too long or too short.

His right shoulder is still sore after missing three games with a strained right rotator cuff, and the pain is not expected to ease for the remainder of the season. Offseason surgery is a possibility. But Pennington expects more of himself than he would, so it should come as no surprise he considers the final three games of the regular season one of the biggest challenges of his pro career.

The Jets (9-4) play three contenders, starting Sunday against New York Giants (7-7-0), also fighting for a playoff spot.

The contest is crucial for both teams. New York wants to keep its lead in the AFC wild-card race over Denver and Baltimore, while the Seahawks want to stay ahead of St. Louis atop their division.

"I want to help push this team into the playoffs," Pennington said. "I just don't want to limp into the playoffs. We're right there on the edge. I don't want to be close. I don't want to be a 9-7 or 10-6 team sitting at home. I want to be a 12-4 team looking good, looking forward to the playoffs."

That might be tough. Division rival New England (12-1) comes next, then St. Louis. For the Jets to have any chance to clinch a playoff spot, they need Pennington to be at his best, even though he will not be completely healthy.

So far this season, Pennington is 0-2 against the elite of the AFC. In both games, he made mistakes that cost his team. In a 13-7 loss at New England earlier this year, the Jets were driving late in the game when Pennington threw into double coverage on fourth down from the Patriots 30. The pass for Wayne Clark was poorly thrown and went incomplete.

Against the Steelers, Pennington tossed three interceptions and had a quarterback rating of 33.6. Pennington said his shoulder has been a non-factor in the game, and was more upset with his decisions.

"I feel I'm making throws,"



7 p.m. Sunday on AFN-Sports

Game time is Central European.

Pennington said. "I even surprise myself with some of the throws I've been making. My whole game is decision making. I can't have games like Sunday where I didn't make good decisions."

Especially against winning teams when the Jets need to score plenty of points. The Seahawks have 66 points in their past two games, while the Jets have scored 35. Seattle won 27-23 in Minnesota last week, taking a one-game lead over St. Louis in the NFC West.

The Seahawks finish with Arizona and Atlanta. "We've had a bunch of now-or-never situations this year," quarterback Matt Hasselbeck said. "I've heard the term this is a must-win game all year. It's been an unusual year. There's been some tremendous highs and tremendous lows. Right now, we're first in our division, and we're just going to try and keep it rolling and see what happens."

Seattle will be without defensive end Grant Wriston, out for the rest of the regular season with an injured left knee ligament, and defensive tackle Marcus Tubbs, out with a sprained ankle.

Linebackers Chad Brown and Tracy White are expected to return, and receiver Darrell Jackson will play after missing practice all week to be with his family following the death of his father. The Seahawks hope to keep their momentum going after beating the Vikings.

"We are trying to put ourselves in positions where we can make the plays to win games now," running back Shaun Alexander said. "I think we're just about ready to make a big push."

So is Pennington. It could be argued that Pennington has had one of the best halves in his five-year career. 2002, Pennington came in and rescued the Jets, winning one game after another to take them to the playoffs. He beat Indianapolis 41-9 in the first round before a horrific game in a 30-10 loss to the Raiders.

With LSU's Saban the front-runner, Dolphins will interview minorities

BY JASON COLE

The Miami Herald

MIAMI — Despite rumors that the Dolphins are slowing the negotiating process with LSU coach Nick Saban, the talks continued to progress, and an offer is expected soon.

Speculation that the Dolphins would slow the process is based on increasing pressure to follow league rules by interviewing a minority candidate.

"The league is watching what's going on there," said John Wooden, chairman of the Fritz Pollard Association. The Pollard group pushed the league for what is known as the Rooney Rule. The rule requires teams to interview at least one qualified minority candidate for the head coach position.

If the Dolphins are looking for a qualified minority candidate, they need only call the NFL office in New York and ask for Art Shell.

On Friday, Shell said he would be interested in meeting with the Dolphins despite the obvious standing of Saban in the Dolphins' eyes.

Shell is the NFL's vice president of football operations. He also is a Hall of Fame offensive tackle, former head coach with the Raiders and longtime NFL assistant coach.

"If you have ever been a head coach, you want the chance to do that again," said Shell, who com-

"Saban is their guy. The rest of this stuff is all a smoke screen."

Anonymous source
on Dolphins coaching search

pleted a 56-41 record with the Raiders from 1989-94. "If the Dolphins have an interest in me, I would be interested in talking to them."

Shell, 58, said he wasn't concerned about strong speculation that Saban is Miami's top choice.

In 2003, the Lions had several minority coaches turn down requests for interviews when it was apparent Detroit would hire Steve Mariucci.

Ultimately, Lions president Matt Millen was fined \$250,000 for violating the Rooney Rule.

"I can't be concerned with what they're doing with Nick Saban. If you have an opportunity to get in front of a team and tell them about yourself, you need to do it," Shell said. "The Dolphins are a first-class organization, a great situation for any coach to consider."

Even if the situation doesn't seem particularly open. On Friday, word spread through the Dolphins offices that the process might take a while, flying in the face of conventional logic about Saban and the situation at LSU.

One report indicated that the Dolphins might wait until January to make an offer to Saban. That seems highly unlikely, two sources said.

"That's what they're saying around here, but don't believe a word of it," a Dolphins source said. "They're making it sound like it's a legitimate search, but it's clear what they're doing. They're just feeling some heat from the league."

"They want Saban, and that's that."

Said another NFL source: "Saban is their guy. The rest of this stuff is all a smoke screen."

The Dolphins interviewed Saban on Tuesday night and were expected to begin negotiating financial terms and responsibilities this weekend.

The Dolphins have inquired about Baltimore consultant and former New York Giants head coach Jim Fassel and Baltimore defensive coordinator Mike Nolan.

However, they are considered fallback options at this point.

The University of Miami defensive coordinator Randy Shannon, another potential minority candidate, said he has not interviewed with the Dolphins nor has been contacted by them.

Dolphins spokesman Harvey Greene said the team would not comment further on the search for a coach.

Two Redskins fined \$10,000 for socks; Plummer's obscene gesture costs \$5,000

The Associated Press

ASHBURN, Va. — Washington Redskins running back Clinton Portis and safety Sean Taylor had their fines for wearing red socks doubled this week to \$10,000.

NFL
briefs

Portis and Taylor were fined \$5,000 apiece last week for wearing red socks instead of the standard white in the Redskins' victory over the New York Giants. They were then again in Sunday's game against Philadelphia, and on Friday the league punished each with a \$10,000 fine for violating uniform rules.

Portis harshly criticized the fines earlier this week. "I think that is a stupid fine for the simple fact that they want everybody to be the same," Portis said Wednesday. "This is an individual game, you know. That is the thing that has the league being the No. 1 sport, because different personalities come together as one and people enjoy that."

Plummer was fined an additional \$10,000 for a out-of-bounds hit that knocked Eagles receiver Terrell Owens into a Redskins cheerleader. No penalty was called on the play, ending Taylor's three-game streak with at least one personal foul penalty.

Plummer fined for obscene gesture toward fan

DENVER — Broncos quarterback Jake Plummer was fined \$5,000 by the NFL on Friday for making an obscene gesture during last week's game.

Plummer and coach Mike Shanahan refused comment on the fine.

Plummer apologized after the game, then during interviews Wednesday admitted he wasn't perfect and promised he'd never make the same mistake.

"I'm not a robot. I'm a man that has warm blood and sometimes it gets hot in there running through my veins," Plummer said.

"You know people do things that they regret. As

long as you can learn a lesson from it and stand up and be a man about what your actions were and move on, that's the true lesson you learn from it."

McNair out for season; Titans RB Brown to miss Sunday's game at Oakland

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — Tennessee quarterback Steve McNair will miss the final three games of the season and have surgery to strengthen his sternum that has plagued him most of the year.

Coach Jeff Fisher said a chief consideration is that McNair, the NFL's co-MVP last season, will need surgery even if he never plays football again to fix the damage caused by three injuries.

"Basically, Steve does not have a solid bony surface throughout the length of his sternum," Fisher said. "There's an area in there that's cartilage. It's not normal. He was born that way."

"And because of this area that's simply cartilage, when Steve suffered the first injury back in 2000, the sternum itself moved, creating a lot of pain and a lot of discomfort."

Also running back Chris Brown will not play Sunday against the Oakland Raiders because of a turf toe injury.

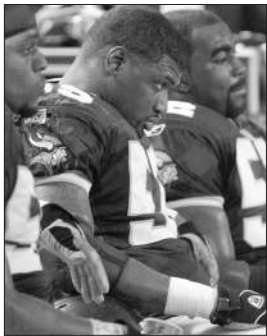
Patriots CB Poole out for the season

FOXBORO, Mass. — Cornerback Tyrone Poole is done for the season after the New England Patriots put him on injured reserve with a knee injury.

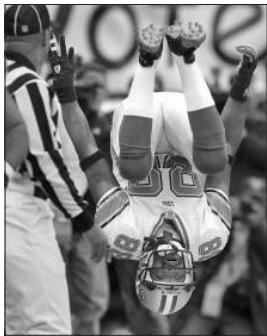
Poole started the first four games this year, but was injured reserve Friday after Miami. He returned the next week against Seattle, but was unable to play the second half.

Poole had arthroscopic surgery and returned to limited action last Sunday against Cincinnati. He went injured reserve Friday.

"It was a situation where medically we felt he needed more time to really get over the hump and we were running out of it," coach Bill Belichick said.



Minnesota linebackers Chris Claiborne, center, and Keith Newman, right, watch the final minutes of Sunday's loss to Seattle. The Vikings have lost five of seven. Last season, they lost seven of their last 10.



Detroit receiver Reggie Swinton celebrates one of the few bright moments this season for the team's offense. The Lions rank 30th in the NFL in yards per game (267.8) and 25th in points (17.8 per game).

Minnesota intent on stopping another late-season collapse

BY LARRY LAGE
The Associated Press

DETROIT — Start strong, then struggle.

For the Vikings and Lions, that about sums it up.

Two months ago, Minnesota was atop the NFC North with a 5-1 record and Detroit was 4-2. Both teams then fell apart.

The Vikings (7-6) have lost five of seven, while the Lions (5-8) have won only one of their past seven. In the mediocre and muddled NFC, Minnesota is very much in the postseason picture.

Daunte Culpepper says the Vikings are in a must-win situation Sunday in Detroit.

"If we want to get to the playoffs, this game is definitely that type of game," Culpepper said. "We put ourselves in this position, and we're the only ones that can take care of the situation by coming out with a big victory this week."

The Lions also are aiming for an improvable spot in the playoffs.

"As crazy as it seems, 8-8 still puts us in the playoffs, or still has the mathematical possibility of still putting us in the playoffs," Joey Harrington said. "I'm a guy who's not going to turn it in be-



7 p.m. Sunday on AFN-Atlantic

Game time is Central European.

fore someone puts the numbers in front of me and says you can't make it. These last three games are very important for us as a team to go out and try to keep ourselves in a position to at least have hope."

In addition to the remarkably similar paths both teams have followed, both offenses have struggled to score after halftime recently and their quarterbacks have not been as effective as earlier this season.

The Vikings' offense has scored just three points after halftime the past two weeks and Detroit's offense has gone five games without scoring a touchdown in the second half.

Culpepper has completed an NFL-high 69.7 percent of his passes and leads the NFC with 3,729 yards passing and 31 TD passes.

But with Randy Moss slowed by a hamstring injury, he has thrown six TDs and five interceptions in the past four games.

Moss might be able to help Culpepper this week because he's close to 100 percent healthy, Vikings coach Mike Tice said.

Harrington had thrown 10 TDs and three interceptions when the Lions were 4-2. But in the past seven games, the third pick of the 2002 draft has thrown as many TDs as interceptions (five) and he's been booed constantly during home games.

Unlike Culpepper, Harrington's job was in jeopardy this week because Lions coach Steve Mariucci waited until Wednesday to say he was still Detroit's No. 1 quarterback. That decision likely will not be received well at Ford Field.

"You know the fans are going to be on him, so he's got a lot to play for his pride and his dignity," said Detroit rookie receiver Roy Williams, who caught five TDs over the first six games and none since.

Mariucci is looking forward to seeing how Harrington responds to the continued scrutiny.

"He's fighting through some adversity, as we all know," Mariucci said. "Yeah, you want to see how he handles that. I expect him to handle it well."

Plummer awaits unkind gestures at Arrowhead

BY DOUG TUCKER
The Associated Press

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Wearing a Denver uniform will be a troubled, apologetic quarterback with a quick trigger finger.

Opposing him will be the sorriest defense in the National Football League, a bunch of guys who admit they've been an embarrassment to themselves, their team and their town.

Further on the subject of embarrassment, how about the starting naming backs?

Second-year man Larry Johnson will be making his first start for Kansas City after publicly sparring much of the year with coach Dick Vermeil, who told him at one point it was time "to take off the diapers."

Starting for the Broncos will be Reuben Droughns, who was benched last week against Miami after losing one fumble and taking the blame for another. His replacement, rookie Tatum Bell, ran for 123 yards, but then separated his shoulder, clearing the way for Droughns to re-enter the picture.

Thrown in the tradition of a long and colorful rivalry that goes back to the founding of the AFL.

Spice it up with the fact the Broncos (8-5) are in the playoff hunt, while the defensively deficient Chiefs (5-8) are thirsting to be spoilers and Sunday's kickoff in Arrowhead Stadium shapes up as a pretty interesting affair.

The Arrowhead crowd, known as one of the loudest and most raucous in the NFL, will have extra incentive. Might they go into overdrive to get after Broncos quarterback Jake Plummer, who made an obscene gesture to a fan last Sunday and spent the week saying he's sorry?

"They'll be working him, which is great," said Chiefs left guard Brian Waters. "After what happened last week, I think he'll be more conscious of where his hands go. But I think our fans will do a great job."

Plummer's problems have not been confined to what he does while sitting on the bench. In the past two weeks, he's thrown six interceptions and no touchdowns, and his 17 interceptions this season are second in the league.

Oddly, the sheer volume of



7 p.m. Sunday on AFN-Radio

Game time is Central European.

noise in Kansas City might work to his advantage.

"They're loud. It's almost so loud you can't hear yourselves," he said. "You just hear the roar and everyone is yelling."

The obscene gesture is certain to follow Plummer wherever he goes. Kansas City just happens to be the first stop.

"I've just got to go out and play," he said. "I don't think I'm going to sit out here and analyze what's happened. What happened last week, I think I've addressed ... and I'm apologetic. That will never happen again."

Denver coach Mike Shanahan would love to bury the entire incident in the deep past.

"Fans know it wasn't a gesture made to the fans in general," said Shanahan, whose Broncos trail San Diego by two games in the AFC West. "He apologized for what he did and that was it. What else can he do?"

Waters, however, there is much still to be done — by the crowd.

"There might be enough pressure in the fourth quarter that he decides to throw one behind his head or something," Waters said.

"He's known to do some tricks with the football and they don't always go well for him. Hopefully, the pressure will add up and he might make a mistake."

Given Kansas City's defense, Plummer might need to make a lot of mistakes for the Chiefs to have a chance. In a 49-38 victory at Tennessee on Monday night, the defense gave up more than 500 yards, including a 426-yard, four-touchdown passing effort by second-year Billy Volek.

Statistically, the defense Plummer will be facing is giving up 383.2 yards per game. That's last among 32 NFL teams.

If anyone feels like making any obscene gestures, it might be the Chiefs' fans to their own defense. This is the fourth straight year Kansas City has ranked at or near the bottom.

"We need to play some defense," said linebacker Monty Beisel. "Any time you're ranked No. 32 in the league, it is absolutely embarrassing. I think more than anything, it has to do with attitude."

Artitude? Vermeil admitted his defensive backs are not physically capable of playing the aggressive bump-and-run tactics preferred by coordinator Gunther Cunningham. Cornerbacks William Barte, Eric Warfield and Dexter McClellan have consistently been beaten.

"I think our defense will get better, but I thought it would last year and it didn't," Vermeil said. "So, I'm not sure I know what I'm talking about right now."



Six interceptions, no touchdowns and one obscene gesture in the past two weeks has put the heat on Broncos QB Jake Plummer.

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Green Bay's better weapon in wintry weather

Veteran Longwell most accurate in harshest conditions

BY ARNIE STAPLETON
The Associated Press

GREEN BAY, Wis. — Brett Favre is the ultimate better quarterback with his unusually large hands and powerful right arm that allows him to zing footballs through icy wind and swirling snow.

Another, often overlooked reason Green Bay has won 18 of 20 home games after Dec. 1 is the formidable right leg of Ryan Longwell, the league's best outdoor kicker.

"We couldn't possibly be more confident than when we send Ryan out there," Packers special teams coach John Bonamego said of Longwell, who has kicked three game-winners in the past month, including one against Detroit last week in 50 mph gusts.

Coupled with Favre and a forecast that calls for snow, wind and temperatures in the single digits and lower teens on Sunday, the Packers (8-5) like their chances of clinching a playoff spot when they play the Jacksonville Jaguars (7-6) in a late afternoon kickoff at Lambeau Field.

They would become just the ninth team in NFL history to recover from a 1-4 record to reach the postseason.

The Jaguars still harbor hopes of the playoffs and were thankful when they got a bit of "cold" weather in Florida over the past few days.

"Last week it was close to 80, so it was nice to get down in the 40s and have some wind and stuff to deal with," Jaguars coach Jack Del Rio said.

Del Rio ought to pop in the Lions-Packers tale to see about dealing with "wind and stuff."

The flag-snapping gusts made every snap, throw, catch, punt and kick an adventure. Packers punter Bryan Barker even had a hard time running onto the field for his final punt because the wind was blowing directly toward Green Bay's sideline.

"I've never seen anything like that except when I lived in Jacksonville and it was hurricane season," Barker said.

Aiming 10 feet outside the right upright on his first attempt, Longwell, an eight-year veteran and the team's career leading scorer, kicked field goals of 36, 28 and 23 yards, the last coming with 2 seconds to go, giving Green Bay a 16-13 win.

"They may have looked short on paper, but they were not chip shots," he protested through reddened, wind-chapped cheeks afterward. "It was as tough as I've ever seen in this place. The wind was howling. The field was swamping."

Green Bay coach Mike Sherman said: "That was a tough wind that I can't. I don't even think the one we kicked (at the end) was a sure thing, other than the fact the only sure thing is Ryan Longwell."

Through rain, sleet, snow and wind, Longwell has made 85 percent of his career attempts at Lambeau Field while opponents have connected on 37 percent.

Even more impressive, he's converted 37 of 43 tries (86 percent) in home games after Dec. 1 and opponents have hit just 17 of 25 (68 percent).

"The ball has to be flying where you're aiming," Longwell said. "That's allowed

me to play the wind, and I have faith in my snapper (Rob Davis) and holder (Barker). A lot of guys would be to aiming down the middle and swinging away, and you just can't do that."

Longwell, who has scored in all 125 games in his NFL career, has converted 44 straight attempts inside 40 yards and is 20 of 23 this season with two of his misses grazing the goalpost and the other a try that was beyond his range.

"He just continues to be money in the clutch," Favre said. "He's very impressive. Some guys leave or when they come out in the draft they may have the leverage to say, 'I want to play in a great climate,'

which tells me that they're in it for their sake and their statistics."

"There's no substitute for being able to play and kick and catch and throw in these types of conditions," Favre added. "I mean, this is what it's all about, and he's as good as they come."

Longwell hasn't missed in the 10 games he's played since sending one wide right against San Francisco two years ago. Favre calls him "Money." Al Harris calls him "2-iron" and Donald Driver calls him "Clutch."

What nobody can call him, however, is a Pro Bowler.

Last year, Longwell made 23 of 26 field goal attempts (86 percent). The only kickers with better success rates all kicked inside domes: Mike Vanderjagt of Indianapolis, Jason Hanson of Detroit and Jeff Wilkins of St. Louis, who represented the NFC in Honolulu.

The season that really bothers Longwell, however, is 2000, when he was 33-for-38



Game time is Central European.



Ryan Longwell (8), 85-percent accurate in his career at Green Bay's Lambeau Field, has converted 37 of 43 field goal attempts (86 percent) in home games after Dec. 1.

(87 percent) and had three game winners, but watched Tampa Bay's Martin Gramatica — who missed a potential winning kick at Lambeau Field and was 28-for-34 (82 percent) — go to Hawaii instead.

Maybe this is his year. "He definitely is a Pro Bowl kicker in my mind," Sherman said. "The conditions, the pressure situations, year in and year out, he's been very consistent. This year, he has been phenomenal."

Rams go to the desert 6-7 and in sight of first

BY BOB BAUM
The Associated Press

TEMPE, Ariz. — The sinking Arizona Cardinals could be just what the St. Louis Rams need to breathe some life into their offense, and their chances for a playoff berth.

The Rams come to Arizona with a 7-7 record after a season's 20-7 loss at Carolina. But in the NFC West, that losing record is good enough to be just one game behind the equally unimpressive Seattle Seahawks.

"Basically, we have to win these last three games," said safety Adam Archuleta, returning to the Arizona State field where he was a college star. "We have a chance to still get into the playoffs, so we just have to win well and start peaking."

The Cardinals (4-9), losers of four in a row, have struggled mightily stopping the run. With Marshall Faulk and Stephen Jackson back in good health, St. Louis coach Sam Dromm despite his love affair with the passing game — might simply try to run through the Arizona defense on Sunday.

"I know how much he hates to do it," Cardinals coach Mike Tomlin said. "Ronald McKinnon said, 'but I think he's definitely going to try to run the ball 40 times or more.'"

That would especially be the case if Chris Chandler gets the start in place of Marc Bulger, who missed last week's loss with a sprained shoulder and is unlikely to play Sunday. The 39-year-old Chandler threw a career-worst six interceptions last week.

"It was just hard," Mertz said. "We played so well as to many different places, he just feels the burden of the loss. Obviously he didn't play very well, but he's better than that, and I know he is. We'll just be supportive, and prop him up and get him going again."

Mertz says his team's defense has improved, finally ending its 31-28 Arizona has given the 49ers their only two victories this season.

"We're not at the point where we're such a good team that we take anyone for granted," Mertz said. "First of all, I don't think that happens in this league anymore. I think most teams realize that anybody can beat anybody."

The Rams are 5-0 against NFC West foes, 1-7 against everyone else. St. Louis finished the season at home against NFC East powerhouse Philadelphia and the AFC's New York Jets.

Josh McDowan will be at quarterback for Arizona for the second game after being benched for the first three of a four-game skid.



Game time is Central European.

think we have some mismatches outside. They're a solid defense, but they're fast. We feel like we can run the ball, also. I mean, we're going to have a challenge on our hands like we do every week, but we think we're a lot better than they are."

The Cardinals haven't shown they are better than anyone lately. Last Sunday, they erased a 25-point deficit against San Francisco to force overtime, but lost 31-28. Arizona has given the 49ers their only two victories this season.

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Spikes' dream realized: a big game in Cincinnati

BY JOE KAY
The Associated Press

CINCINNATI — December has always been the cruelest month for Takeo Spikes.

For five dismal seasons, the exceptional linebacker threw his body around the field in yet another meaningless late-season game with the Cincinnati Bengals. He would shine even though it didn't matter, and pine for the playoffs.

On Sunday, he finally gets his wish. Spikes will play a December game in Cincinnati with major implications.

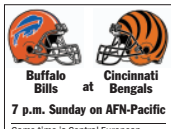
The Buffalo Bills (7-6) have barged into the field of playoff contenders by winning four straight and seven of nine. In his second season with the Bills, Spikes is learning at long last how it feels to be somewhere other than last place in the final month.

It's everything he imagined.

"This is what I wanted to do, to be a part of something special. Spikes said. "The emotions are going to run wild, man. The biggest reason is I've never been in the month of December, this late, and still have something to play for other than pride."

His old team is back on familiar ground.

The Bengals (6-7) essentially



Game time is Central European.

knocked themselves out of contention with a 35-28 loss at New England last Sunday, leaving five teams ahead of them for the AFC's two wild card berths. Plus, Carson Palmer got knocked out of the game with a sprained knee, prompting Jon Kitna's return to quarterback.

The Bills and Bengals are two of the NFL's hottest teams, pulling themselves out of slow starts with flourish. Cincinnati faded last Sunday. Buffalo can't afford to do the same a week later.

"We're in a playoff situation right now," quarterback Drew Bledsoe said. "We're playing for our lives. Every game we go into we have to win or we're done. That's what it is."

To say in contention, the Bills will have to do something. They haven't done in a long time. They haven't won five in a row since 1998.

Some scores settled in Wolfpack

Old, new foes get taste of championship competition before holidays

BY RUSTY BRYAN
Stars and Stripes

WÜRZBURG, Germany — Revenge was a main theme Saturday as some of DODGE Europe's top wrestlers got together for the 13th annual edition of the Wolfpack Holiday Classic.

"He beat me last year at Europeans," Bryan Isbell of Brussels said after he defeated Heidelberg's Andrew Zachar 7-6 for the 171-pound championship. "It feels really good."

To prepare for this season, Isbell spent the summer working with a Brussels freestyle club that had him training with more than just Belgian champions.

"We had Iranian wrestlers, Turkish wrestlers — international champions from all over," he said. "It was great experience."

Like all the athletes here, Isbell knows one match does not a season make.

"He's a great wrestler," Isbell said of Zachar, the defending European 152-pound champion. "Euros are going to be tough."

The 140-pound final also matched a European champion and a runner-up, but of different weights. Devon Gardner of Bitburg, last year's runner-up at 130, defeated the 125-pound king, Jesse Painter of Würzburg.

Gardner, who had defeated the 145-pound European runner-up Tony Gagon of Wiesbaden last time out, won 12-4. Gagon joined Gardner as a champion here with a fall in 1:50 over Andrew Hoffman of Heidelberg in the 145-pound division.

"You can't get better if you don't wrestle the toughest wrestlers," Gardner said.

No one knows that better than Cole McClain of Menwith Hill, McClain, who lost a 6-4 decision to Karl Saucier of Ramstein in last year's European 140-pound title bout, claimed the 152-pound crown here with a dominating deck of Heidelberg's Andre



Ansbach's Adam Golden, left, and Brussels's Eric Popp vie for position during their 189-pound semifinal match in the Wolfpack Holiday Classic in Würzburg, Germany, on Saturday. Golden pinned Popp at 3:53 to advance to the final, in which he lost to Würzburg's Jim Curtis.

RAYMOND T. CONWAY/Stars and Stripes

Along at the 4:11 mark.

Saucier wasn't here Saturday, but McClain was unconcerned.

"I've been working with the British national freestyle team," McClain said. "I'm not going to finish second again."

Also looking toward the Europeans are several other 2004 Wolfpack champions: Seth Romero of Menwith Hill at 112, Paul Mosman of Brussels at 119, and Jim Curtis of Würzburg at 189.

"This is my first year of high school wrestling," said Romero, who posted pins in 59 seconds and 2:37 en route to his crown. "This gives me confidence for Europeans."

Mosman, younger brother of former Brussels champion Zachar, posted 19-9 and 18-1 victories in his two matches. He saw the technical falls as preparation for Euro-

peans.

"This tournament shows all the talented wrestlers," he said, a sentiment echoed by Curtis.

"This sets up Euros," said Curtis, who gained a measure of revenge when he pinned Adam Golden of Ansbach at the 3:21 mark of the pair's 189-pound final. "I can't wait."

Golden, who was trailing Curtis 9-0 at the time of the fall, had beaten him the previous week, Curtis said. "I wanted to make sure I beat him in our home tournament."

However, 215-pound champ Mike Ewing of Ansbach, who flattened Chris Garcia of Wiesbaden in 3:38, has an outlook teammate Golden can adopt to ease the sting of losing here.

"I look on all these tournaments as practice for Europe-

ans," said Ewing, who admitted to some disappointment that flashy newcomer Cole Macey of Ramstein, a Far East champion, skipped the Wolfpack.

Another Ramstein newcomer made the field — and an impression.

Freshman Cody Reinhart, who spent the past three years winning middle school tournaments

in Ohio, spent precisely 1:13 on the mats Saturday in winning his two bouts and the 135-pound championship. That probably wouldn't happen in Ohio, but Reinhardt's not complaining.

"I've never lived in a foreign country before," he said. "This is a good opportunity for me."

E-mail Rusty Bryan at: bryan@main.estrines.ssd.mil

High school wrestling scoreboard

Wolfpack Holiday Classic

WÜRZBURG, Germany — Results Saturday from championship-bracket matches in the 2004 Wolfpack Holiday Classic wrestling tournament at the Leighton Barracks gym (forfeits not included):

Team scoring — Würzburg 155, Heidelberg 134, Patch 114, Wiesbaden 91, Bitburg 90, Ansbach 83, Menwith Hill 60, Brussels 55, Ramstein 44, Gießen 36, Kaiserslautern 27, Napsen 26, Bamberg 25.5, Völk 23, Hanau 11, Alenbourg 8, Hertenfels 6, Wilsdorf 6.

189 pounds — Chris Toner (Heid) pin Davis Grant (Wzbg) 2:36; James Ricks (Pat) pin Chris Spencer (Wies) 5:06; Anthony Davis (Wzbg) pin Ricks 5:18; Championships: Toner 10:01; 1st-3rd place: Ricks pin Spencer 5:34.

112 — Jon Hoffman (Heid) pin Jared Cox (Heid) 3:26; Robert DeCarlos (Wies) pin Shannon Sukat (Bitb) 2:39; Ryan Singleton (Bitb) pin Ryan Barry (Wzbg) 1:10; Seth Romero (MH) pin Hoffman 5:55; Singleton pin DeCarlos 5:41; Championships: Romero pin Singleton 2:37; 3rd place: Hoffman pin DeCarlos 1:54.

119 — Daniel McElroy (Bram) pin Kristopher Higgins (Wies) 2:36; Judy Brenneka (Ansb) pin Armon Kemmer (Wzbg) 5:58; Nate Buckley (Pat) pin John Williams (Ansb) 3:10; Paul Mosman (Brus) def. McElroy 19:39; Buckley pin Brenneka 1:18; Championships: Mosman def. Buckley 38:1; 3rd place: McElroy def. Higgins 2:7.

125 — Jesse Best (MH) pin Brandon Foster (Wies) 1:52; Michael Zachar (Heid) pin Stephen Den (Han) 3:08; Noah Sheppard (Ramt) pin M. Zachar 3:42; Andrew Moon (Heid) def. Best 15:1; Championships: Sheppard pin Moon 2:26; 3rd place: M. Zachar pin Den 3:21.

130 — Chris Williams (Gies) pin Michael Best (Pat) 2:36; Crayge Majors (Kais) pin Jasmine Thompson (Ansb) 3:02; Jonathan Painter (Wzbg) pin Williams 4:52; Championships: Painter pin Majors 1:41; 3rd place: Williams pin Brady 5:5.

135 — Cody Reinhart (Ansb) pin Perianne Tucker (Heid) 1:22; Tyson Rydych (Wzbg) pin Daniel Herrin (Bam) 1:38; Championships: Reinhart pin Rydych 1:01; 3rd place: Herrin def. Tucker 8:2.

140 — Devon Gardner (Bitb) pin Steve Hinton (Wzbg) 1:31; Steven Ponte (Wies) pin Philip Turner (Wies) 3:04; Jesse Painter (Wzbg)

pin Ponte 3:16; Gardner pin Debra Clark (Heid) 2:32; Championships: Gardner def. Turner 19:2.

145 — Gary King (Vic) pin Connor Higgins (Wies) 1:15; Andrew Hoffman (Heid) pin Cody Schiarbaum (Wzbg) 1:16; Hoffman def. Chris Vucich (Pat) 9:3; Jeremy Brady (Heid) pin Brian Priante (Wzbg) 4:33; King pin Daniel Renard (Bitb) 3:08; Hoffman def. King 16:5; Tony Gagon (Wies) pin Brady 3:54; Championships: Hoffman pin Brady 1:50; 3rd place: Vucich def. King 6:4.

152 — Mike McClain (MH) pin Randy Letz (Gies) 3:43; Shawn Renaldi (Bitb) pin Andrew Peterson (Bitb) 2:36; McClain pin S. Renaldi 4:52; Championships: McClain pin S. Renaldi 4:11; 3rd place: S. Renaldi pin Peterson 3:58.

160 — Daniel Jones (Wies) pin Christina Branch (Pat) 1:39; Guadalupe Flores (Napf) pin Sean Hise (Wzbg) 1:24; Flores pin Brandon Speight (Ansb) 2:29; Elliot Boltz (Heid) pin Dorian M. Championships: Flores def. Boltz by injury default 1:01; 3rd place: Hise pin Speight 3:10.

171 — Robert Fleck (Wzbg) pin Paul Hurley (Wies) 5:15; Rex Ely (Heid) def. K.C. Brown (Gies) 3:1; Bryan Isbell (Brus) pin Doug Bagall (Ansb) 2:17; Andrew Zachar (Heid) def. Fleck 4:57; 1st def. Ely 1:7; Championships: Isbell def. A. Zachar 7:4; 3rd place: Brown def. Ely 7:4.

189 — Matthew Domko (Gies) pin Zach McNeil (Wies) 3:31; Justin Eberg (Bam) pin Jeffery Spencer (Wies) 1:21; Jim Curtis (Wzbg) def. Eberg 3:31; Mike Buckens (Pat) pin Derrick Neville (Han) 2:50; Eric Popp (Wzbg) def. Mike Gumberton (MH) 14:7; 2nd place: Domko (Ansb) pin Domko 1:21; Golden pin Popp 3:53; Curtis def. Buckens 12:1; Championships: Curtis pin Golden 3:21; 3rd place: Brown def. Popp 3:31.

215 — Mike Ewing (Ansb) pin Jordan Britten (Wies) 3:50; Chris Garcia (Wies) pin Dan Lozano (Ansb) 1:28; Ewing pin Brandon Simmons (Heid) 1:28; Garcia pin Brian Taylor (Pat) 1:59; Championships: Ewing pin Garcia 3:38; 3rd place: Lozano pin Taylor 1:46.

275 — Spencer Johnson (Ansb) pin Pierce Johnston (Kais) 2:36; Daniel Dantas (Heid) pin Luis Ortiz (Han) 2:55; Greg Burris (Wies) pin Troy Price (Kais) 3:25; Mike Burris (Wzbg) pin Johnson 3:25; Terence Smith (Han) pin James Osbourne (Wzbg) 3:50; Brian Bowles (Pat) pin Dantas 2:35; Bowles def. Surpris 6:4; Ortiz (Han) pin Burris 1:50; 3rd place: Surpris def. Smith 11:8.



RAYMOND T. CONWAY/Stars and Stripes

Menwith Hill's Seth Romero, top, pins Bitburg's Ryan Singleton at 2:37 to win the 112-pound final of the Wolfpack Holiday Classic in Würzburg, Germany, on Saturday.

SPORTS



Pennington's shoulder, entire team will be tested in tough three-game quest for playoffs, Page 40

Irish now fighting for their reputation

Plagued by problems, Notre Dame loses luster from once-golden football program

BY NANCY ARMOUR
The Associated Press

The goals are as lofty as they were in Knute Rockne and Frank Leahy's day, the demand as unforgiving.

Winning is, and always will be, everything at Notre Dame. But the gilt has been flaking for years now, and the furor over Tyrone Willingham's firing only exposed the extent of the flaws. For all its rich history and tradition, Notre Dame's football program is now like so many others in need of a rehab.

"I think right now, when you're 6-5, you can't call yourself an elite program," athletic director Kevin White said. "I think historically we are, traditionally we are. But coming out of the 2004 season, we certainly are not. We have to find our way back to the pinnacle position, and that's what we're going to do."

But how? The harsh criticism and inside squabbling that accompanied Willingham's dismissal are only the latest problems for Notre Dame. In truth, the program has been in decline for nearly a decade.

"You are what you are, folks, and right now, you're a 6-5 football team," new coach Charlie Weiss said. "And guess what? That's not good enough."

The Irish haven't won a national title since 1988, and it's been 11 years since they even contended for one. Their records have been mediocre at best, and any progress has been short-lived.

Lou Holtz lost 11 games in his last three seasons, two more than he'd lost in the previous six. Bob Davie was the first coach in 34 years to lose four straight, and his two losing seasons in five years matched Gerry Faust. Willingham lost 13-15 after winning his first eight games, losing five games by 31 points or more.

Knute Rockne compiled a record of 105-12-5 as Notre Dame's football coach from 1918 to 1930. The goals are as lofty as they were in Rockne's day, but the results don't compare. The Fighting Irish haven't won a national championship since 1988 and haven't contended for one in more than a decade.



Notre Dame's most recent controversy was the firing of Tyrone Willingham, the school's first black head football coach, after three years of a five-year deal.

Highs and lows in Irish history

Year, Coach		Notre Dame coaching records				
		Yrs	W	L	T	Pct.
1887-89	No head coaches	5	7	4	1	.625
1894-1	L. Morison	1	3	1	0	.750
1895	H.G. Hadden	1	3	1	0	.750
1896-98	Frank Hering	3	12	6	1	.668
1899	James McInerney	1	6	3	1	.667
1900-01	Patrick O'Dea	2	14	4	2	.750
1902-03	James Faragher	2	14	2	0	.857
1904	Louis Salmon	1	5	3	0	.625
1905	Henry McDevine	1	5	4	0	.556
1906-07	Thomas Barry	2	12	1	1	.883
1908	Victor Place	1	8	4	0	.667
1909-10	Frank Longman	2	11	1	2	.857
1911-12	John Marks	2	13	0	2	.833
1913-17	Jesse Harper	5	34	5	1	.863
1918-20	Knute Rockne	13	105	12	5	.881
1931-33	Hunk Anderson	3	18	9	2	.630
1934-35	Emmet Layden	2	7	10	3	.409
1941-43	46-53 Frank Leahy	11	87	11	9	.885
1944-51	Mike Devore	8	32	10	0	.762
1945-1963	Hugh Devore	2	9	9	1	.500
1964-68	Terry Brennan	5	12	18	0	.400
1969-62	Joe Kuharich	4	17	23	0	.425
1964-74	Ara Parseghian	11	95	16	4	.856
1975-80	Dan Devine	6	53	16	6	.754
1981-85	Gerry Faust	5	30	26	1	.535
1986-86	Lou Holtz	6	100	0	0	1.000
1997-01	Bob Davie	5	35	25	0	.583
2001	George O'Leary	0	0	0	0	.000
2002-04	Ty Willingham	3	21	15	0	.583
TOTALS		114	802	262	42	.744

Source: The Associated Press

The Irish have been unranked for long stretches at a time and have been in a top-tier bowl game only once since 1995 — a 41-9 loss to Oregon State in the 2001 Fiesta Bowl. They've had one first-round draft pick in the past five years.

The off-the-field woes were equally galling. There have been scandals more suited for a football factory, including an age discrimination lawsuit and rape accusations against four former players. The school suffered its first major NCAA violation after a booster lavished more than a dozen players with gifts, trips and money — paid for with the \$1.4 million he'd embezzled from her employer.

Perhaps worst of all was the ever-so-brief tenure of George O'Leary, who resigned in December 2001 — five days after he was hired — after admitting he lied on his résumé about his academic and athletic background.

O'Leary looked like the perfect person to revive the Irish.

SEE IRISH ON PAGE 37



Sparks makes three free throws to complete No. 9 Kentucky's comeback against No. 13 Louisville

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James Madison runs to victory, first Division I-AA championship against two-time champ Montana

Page 37



Raptors trade Carter to Nets for three players, two draft picks

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Wrestlers get championship competition in Wolfpack

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